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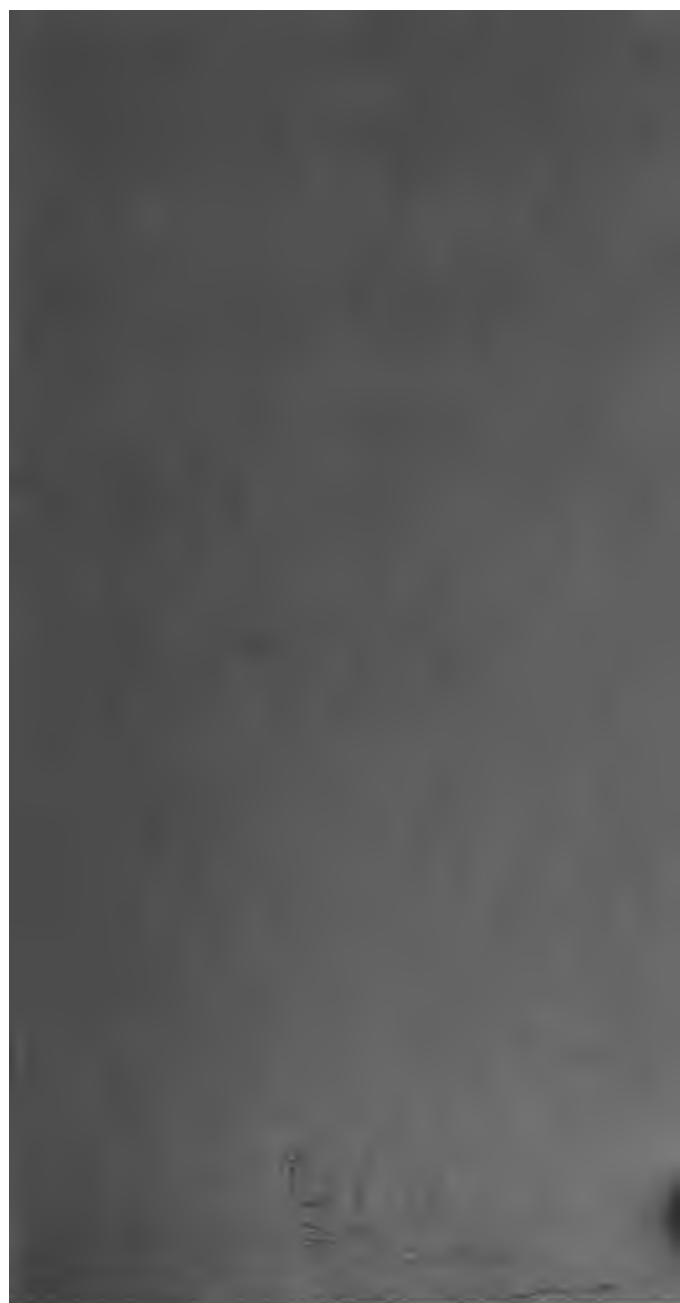
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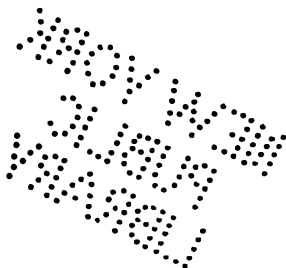
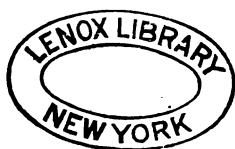
A NEW MEASURE OF ENGLISH VERSE.

BY JOHN JUMP,

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"ART DE LA PERSPECTIVE AU MOYEN D'UNE ÉCHELLE;" AND OTHER
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1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the transparency and accountability of the organization. This section also outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data, ensuring that the information is reliable and up-to-date.

2. The second part of the document focuses on the implementation of the proposed changes. It details the steps involved in the process, from the initial planning stage to the final execution. This section highlights the challenges faced during the implementation and provides solutions to overcome them. It also discusses the role of each department in ensuring the successful completion of the project.

3. The third part of the document provides a summary of the findings and conclusions. It summarizes the key points discussed in the previous sections and provides a clear overview of the results. This section also includes recommendations for future actions and a timeline for the next steps. The document concludes by expressing confidence in the organization's ability to achieve its goals and maintain its commitment to excellence.

P R E F A C E.

TRAVELLING by steam, Reader, when you come to think of it, was a lively invention ; a rapid progress. Gaslight, too, was a bright idea. Phosphoric matches again : if the tablet of your memory still retain a trace of the familiar tinder-box, phosphoric matches are a positive miracle. But the press, as Mrs. de Trepka has just observed, the page of types—what a multiplication table is that page of types ! what a propagator of thought ! what an electric flame to the mental eye ! The sixteenth century is not yet outdone in the production of wonders. Well ! all these things are stupendous in their conception, incredible at their birth, immense in their influence ; yet, reader, like everything human, they are not without their inconvenience : the medal has its reverse. One, let alone divorce of body and limbs without mutual consent, whisks you over the loveliest landscape before your retina has well seized its image, or souses you with geometrical rectitude through the very centre of a big billow instead of riding you neatly over the top of it in the old sailing fashion : another blows you out of bed or out at window, or sets a burgh ablaze before you can whistle “come hither.” And that German engine, that press, leagued

as it is with Hamiltonian systems and ragged schools, and with the *cacoethes scribendi* to boot, makes writers so swarm and works so pullulate that the life of a reader, shrunk as it has become since the reduction of the good old Methuselah standard, no longer suffices to skim over the tithe of a tithe of the exuberant production. Hence the modest excuses which preface every author's "new trespass on the attention of an "indulgent public." This work, however, claims exemption from apology as adding nothing to the mountainous mass: as merely changing the form of what exists and has existed any time these near two thousand years, still young, vigorous, beautiful, inimitable,—the charming Epistles of Ovidius Naso. Why should the Cantab and the Oxonian monopolize a delightful feast? Why not you, O general reader, be admitted to a table so invitingly served? Come in, good friend; the baked meats consist of a faithful rescript of the prettiest love-letters you ever perused, save certain correspondence perhaps which occurred between yourself and you know who. Take them then, not as our friend Lawrence says, under your protection, but into your closet, and there, if they amuse, your most devoted servant will be largely paid.

There is yet another lurking motive, reader, than the introduction of Naso for wheedling into your acquaintance: apart, too, of that vulgar spring of human activity, that six-and-eightpence which some law-grinder sees at the bottom of

every man's act and deed, and whereon the less said the sooner mended. The *alterum mobile* in question is to set before you a simple measure of English verse which you have not yet seen, and which seems peculiarly adapted to epistolary poetry.

Dryden and Pope have proved that our heroic rhyme of five feet renders well the Greek and Latin hexameter. Our lighter four-foot verse, as in Gay's fables, seems apt enough to supply the place of the pentameter, which couples so beautifully with the longer line. We have abundant examples of poems in alternate eight and six syllables, a very pleasing light measure, but I know of no complete stanza founded on a shorter line combined with the grave heroic; and yet the effect is agreeable, rendering the verse somewhat less severe than the full measure of all tens, yet less skipping than the alternate eight and six. Let us take a fine example of full-lined alternate rhymes, and divide it into its harmonic bars by points of suspension.

The curfew tolls....the knell of parting day;
The lowing herds....wind slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods....his weary way,
And leaves the world....to darkness and to me.

Here is a rich model of deep gravity nearly in pure iambics. Reading with attention, it will be remarked that the solemn tone proceeds chiefly from the long bars of six syllables. Now let it not be deemed profanation to dissect this. Fear not the scapel be mad enough to attempt to mend that which is perfect already. Its object

is merely to try conclusions : to examine the effect as to gravity or airiness, of lopping a syllable here and there ; for instance, or as they say for fun, cut off the first and last of the first line :

Curfew tolls the knell of parting.

The grave iambic is become a gay trochaic : necessarily, for such is the known effect of annulling the first syllable of an iambic line. But this is foreign to the purpose, which, on the contrary, is highly serious. Let each second and fourth line then be shortened by two syllables, but so as to leave the verse iambic, for to mix the two measures would be cacophonous. The pauses shall be indicated as before.

The curfew tolls . . . the knell of parting day ;
The herds wind slow . . . ly o'er the lea ;
The ploughman homeward plods . . . his weary way,
And leaves the world . . . to night and me.

The gravity is sensibly lessened in the diminished lines by reducing the long bar of six syllables to one of four. Let us try the effect of curtailing two syllables more.

The curfew tolls . . . the knell of parting day ;
The herds wind o'er the lea ;
The ploughman homeward plods . . . his weary way,
And leaves the world to me.

Here in the alternate lines the two bars are reduced to one, but of the longer measure ; hence the stanza has recovered a portion of its original gravity, though it has ceased to possess the solemnity of the original. Now do just read this last once again ; for, barring the effect of that hallucination to which inventors are liable, it reads more like measured prose, not than

verse does, but than any measure of rhymes you have met with. For this reason it is here ted to render the alternate lines of Ovid.

It is to be observed that I compare this result the Latin couplet only in as much as it has a serious tone in an alternate measure, not as producing a similar effect. Were the harmonies, the English and the Latin, more aptible of comparison, our two lines, con- ing as they do of three pauses, would be more ous to the longer Latin line alone. Take n example a rough imitation of Melibœus Tityrus, in the first lines of Virgil's eclogue.

Melibœus. Tityre, tu patulæ recubans
Sub tegmine fagi,
Silvestrem tenui musam
Meditaris avena.
Nos patriæ fines et dulcia
Linquimus arva :
Nos patriam fugimus, tu, Tityre,
Lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces
Amarillida sylvas.
Tityrus. O Melibœe, Deus nobis
Hæc otia fecit.

Melibœus. O Tityrus, reclined the woods among,
Cool in their ample shade,
Your oaten flageolet and rural song
Still make the charm they made.
We to our native home must bid adieu
And its luxuriant fields :
We fly the land enjoyed in peace by you,
With all the charm it yields,
Where, Tityrus, you make the vale resound
With Amarillis' name.
Tityrus. A god, O Melibœus, we have found,
In goodness as in fame.

word before parting, indispensable to fend
the critic dart that may fairly enough be

aimed at certain spots of imperfect translation. Let thy indulgence then, O Aristarchus, reflect that the rendering is nearly line for line. Now since a line of Latin, at a medium, consists of fourteen syllables, and that the English line averages but eight, it was impossible to give every thought entire. True, four lines might have been devoted to two, which would have given scope and to spare; but conscience, reader, conscience! It would have doubled this poor increment to the Atlantæan mass of British publication which, if you recollect, inspired the writer with awe at the very symptoms of his *cacoethes*; or, more honestly and between ourselves, weak in fiction as he is, that was too much tether. He has a horrid fear of amplifying—it needs wit; now common sense can contract. An amplified translation, too, presents the physiognomy rather of the translator than of the original. I have a fine example of this before my eye at this moment, in the title-page of that splendid novel TEN THOUSAND A YEAR. It is the following eight lines of Horace, with their translation by Dryden. Read:

Fortuna sævo læta negotio, et
 Lusum insolentem ludere pertinax
 Transmutat incertos honores,
 Nunc mihi nunc alii benigna.
 Laudo manentem. Si celeres quatit
 Pennas, resigno quæ dedit et mea
 Virtute me involvo, probamque
 Pauperiem sine dote quæro.

It would be a pity, reader, if you did not understand this; in that case, do get some-

body to translate it for you: or stay, who is your more devoted servant than myself? I'll do it for you verbatim.

Fortune, merry in cruel business and
persistent in playing an unexpected game,
transmutes uncertain honours;
now kind to me—now to another,
I laud her while she stays; but if she shake
her rapid wings, I resign what she gave,
wrap myself in my virtue, and, undowered,
seek an honourable poverty.

The last three lines aptly portray the noble Aubrey after the loss of his ten thousand a year, and in the Latin beautifully. Dryden's translation runs thus:

Fortune, that with malicious joy
Does man, her slave, oppress,
Proud of her office to destroy,
Is seldom pleased to bless.
Still various and unconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Provokes, degrades, delights in strife,
And makes a lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she 's kind,
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes her wings and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away:
The little or the much she gave is quietly resigned:
Content with poverty my soul I arm,
And virtue, though in rags, will keep me warm.

It must be borne in mind that Dryden figures here by the merest accident. This bit, too, we verily believe to be the worst he ever wrote; but as his well-earned fame stands on a mountain rock, it will not feel the shifting of a poor pebble that may be shaken by any criticism here. Moreover, Dryden is in presence merely as a sort of Richard Roe, in the cause hereby instituted, versus the unincorporate body of free translators, whom I would rather call, as in fact they are sometimes called.

loose translators, a class which is to the highest degree imposing, both in number and in name. Their president is the great Voltaire himself, who lays down their principle, saying, "Read well your author, and then write him in your own way." In my humble opinion this is writing yourself by means of your author's ideas. Could you ever, reader, perceive even a glimpse of Shakspeare in the Shakspeare of Ducis, and so of many others that I could name? No: the author exists in his thoughts; to these the surest way are his words, and the nearer these can be rendered the better you will exhibit him. In any other way you will only exhibit yourself. Look at those sixteen lines of Dryden. Does their ambling loquacity give you the most distant idea of the subdued eight lines of Horace? Certainly not. They are as much like them as an air balloon is to a cricket ball, one all wind, the other hard pith. It is much to be doubted whether the six last of them would have tempted the author of "Ten Thousand a Year" had he never seen the Latin.

Creech, in my opinion, hits it off far better, because more literally, thus:

Still fortune plays at fast and loose,
And still maliciously jocose
Her cruel sport she urges on,
Now smiles on me; on me bestows,
And then upon another throws
Vast heaps of wealth, and takes them back as soon.
Whene'er she stays with what she brings
I'm pleased; but when she shakes her wings
I straight resign my just pretence,
I give her back her faded gold;
Myself I in my virtue fold,
And live content with want and innocence.

This is pretty faithful translation. If it contain four lines more than the Latin, it is to make out rhymes. It adds but few new ideas to the original. The expansion, however, of these four lines entirely destroys that pithiness for which the Latin poet is so remarkable. A still closer rendering would assuredly be better. Let us try to versify as closely as possible the bit of prose you read above :

Fortune in cruel business gay,
And prone a saucy game to play,
Her fickle honours will transmute ;
Now mine, now Paul's, the attribute.
I laud her present ; but if once
She flit, I let her fly,
And in a virtuous pride ensconce
My honest poverty.

Here is no more than in the Latin : I will not pretend to say there is no less. It slurs a little the fifth line and the end of the fourth, but the thoughts are there ; and it is better to lose something, than by the help of spurious matter to retain the whole. See too, reader, whether the compressed form have not restored something of the gravity of the original.

My predilection, then, is decidedly for close translation ; and aware that in a long work, compressed even far beyond the limits of the Latin, this principle may have induced in sundry places an excess of brevity, care has been taken wherever this occurs to add a note, giving the full sense.

In nearly half the letters, as in the third for instance, the number of lines in the Latin would not complete stanzas of four lines each : in that

case, in some convenient part of the letter two lines are expanded into four, or six into eight, to complete the scale. Wherever this occurs it is indicated by a note. The learned reader need not in general trouble himself with the notes, they will tell him no more than he knows already ; but those who are unacquainted with the *preux chevaliers* of Greece and Troy may, in the perusal, pick up a good deal of their more than half fabulous history. The elucidations, in fine, are given for that class of readers, and to gain the good will of my fair countrywomen.

Paris.

J. J.



NOTE ON ENGLISH HARMONY.

It is wrong, reader, very wrong, to entice you a step farther into prose composition. Having artfully led you to burn with impatient curiosity to open these love-letters, 'tis a vilely-played card to baulk the appetite by delaying the feast ; but your servant is sadly infirm of purpose, and, mounted on his hobby, a mere Gilpin, he cannot draw up at Islington, but you may stop. You may order a Penelope and Ulysses to be served up immediately. Didst see the grand Hyde Park exhibition? No doubt you did, and the grand Parisian *exposition* too. What works ! what inventions, eh ! what fecundity in the mind of man ! Yon preface opened in ecstacy on invention, yet let me tell you some merit is due to the negative inventor—to the exposor of bad novelties, and still more to the exploder of old errors. Now there exists an old, firm-set, erroneous idea in my line of business, and I have a mind to set up reformer, even in a debut : *gard la riposte*. But where honour calls the good soldier will on, and I must try, feeble as be my means, to root up a false notion which subsists about English verse.

The illustrious statesman, Sheridan, who has written very largely on the English language, expresses his opinion that our favoured tongue possesses mines of wealth as yet undiscovered by poets. This opinion has taken root and thrives luxuriantly. It is thus cited and commented by Perry, at the close of the grammar article, in his most valuable pronouncing dictionary. The parentheses contain notes by the way.

“ Mr. Sheridan says that when the art of reading with propriety shall have been established, and produced its effects, a field will be opened to our writers both in poetry and prose which will display in a new light the vast compass of our language in point of harmony and expression, from the same causes that produced similar effects at Rome in the writers of the Ciceronian or Augustan age.” (Now Perry continues, speaking for himself.)

“ That our language is capable of great improvement with respect to prosody is apparent, for by inspection into English verse we shall find that syllables which are naturally *long* and *emphatical* are frequently made short, and those which are *short* substituted for *long* syllables.” (The italics are his own.)

“ By this indiscriminate use of *accent* and *long quantity*, allowing *strength* to supply the place of *length*, the harmony of verse is marred. If our lexicographers and poets” (that is, *Ego et Rex meus*) “ were universally to adopt a plurality of accent, and make a proper distinction between long and short syllables, as the Greeks did, by the right application of the grave and acute accent, it would tend to free our verse from this glaring absurdity.”

Were this a solitary critique, I would simply answer, “Profaner, read Milton!” but so far from being alone, he stands here the resumer of a greater man’s opinion, supported by the whole phalanx of British prosodists, and must not be treated lightly. The great orator, in the passage quoted, does not very definitely lay down his views. He seems to have a mental perception of some Eldorado to be arrived at in time to come. We shall perhaps see whether, like its prototype, it turn out to be a bubble.

Perry specifies his complaint more clearly, and therefore discussion shall be with him. We'll talk the matter over quietly together.

Tell me then, my good Perry, what is a Latin gradus? It is a lexicon to show the longs and the shorts of the Latin tongue.—And the accent, Perry? The gradus gives no accent.—Why not, pray? The Latins disregarded accent in the construction of their verse.—The Latins were right, my dear fellow, for having adopted one scale of appreciation, it would have been absurd to refer to another. See to what confusion it would lead: *amo*, *amas*, *amat*, which are iambs by quantity in all Latin verse, would have become trochees by accent: poor Virgil would have been at his wit's end to know what to do with them. No: to all appreciable qualities one means of appreciation is enough. One basis for one simple calculation is the rule: cloth by the yard, corn by the bushel, cheese by the pound; and, though there be masses susceptible of estimation in more than one of these ways, yet none who know how to expedite business have recourse to both pottle and pound to estimate the same lot. But your English gradus, Perry? I never saw one: the only help to English verse is the rhyming dictionary, which gives no quantity; for our poets are so dreadfully irregular in their use of longs and shorts, that from their works, which are our only means, we have never been able to determine a tenth part of the syllables as to whether they are short or long.—And the accent, my good Perry? Oh, the accent, we mark that in every word; it peers out; it is sensible to feeling through all their lines. See my dictionary.—And it never struck you, my honest prosodian, that this was enough? That though

Latin and Greek be doled by length of syllable, English might be estimated by weight of accent, and so much the more reasonably, since this is in the feeling of us all, and the other baffles even your own profound research ; but, on the contrary, with Shakespeare, Milton, and the whole host dinning accent in your ear, you must go gaping after new lights that are one day to shine and cause *the harmony of verse to be no longer MARRED*, and *English verse to be freed from its GLARING ABSURDITIES*. Why these two expressions are downright sacrilege, for they level at the works of demigods.

Consider that in every nation the first poet possessed the whole principle of the art. It was an instinct as sure as that of the spider which makes its web. Successors may refine, as Sheridan says Virgil and Horace did in the Augustan age of Rome, but in no nation of the world have they ever changed the principle of the earlier masters of the art, founded, as I say it was, not on lexicons but on that instinct of their species which is innate and infallible.

No, my good Perry, you have nothing to do with what Milton ought to have done ; that is above your sphere. Consider well what he has done, and since you find in his lines an inextricable chaos of longs and shorts, take your scales : weigh them by accent, and you will find in them all a beautifully harmonious order.

Nay, your double principle can lead to nothing but confusion, as we have shown it would have done in the Latin. Take the words *able*, *evil*, *image*, all trochees by the ear, which is necessity, and by the authority of all English verse : apply to them the principle of length they become iambi, the very oppo-

site in rhythmic effect, which is absurd. Observe that in a Latin dissyllable you now and then find one of the two doubtful ; but you never found both syllables doubtful : you never saw the same word iambus and trochee : 'tis an incongruity. No, no, your double system creates for your British poet the same dilemma we supposed to Virgil just now : he sings, *How happy could I be with either were I other dear charmer away* ; and one of them, Perry, must go away, for no poet's ear will ever take those words for any thing but trochees, as they are by accent and by usage, which is immutable necessity : hence, English verse has no concern with quantity in length.

Then, say you, what is the function of longs and shorts in our poetry ? They serve in verse as in prose to give a solemn gravity or a tripping lightness to the flow of language ; to make harmony and pathos ; but they have nothing to do with the metrical construction of the verse. So in Greek and Latin the tonic accent served to undulate the style, but was unconnected with the metre ; and that for the reason above assigned : because one principle of measure is enough and two are absurd.

I have heard tell of a printed attempt at English verse in Roman metre of dactyl and spondee by time. It is said to be unsuccessful, and no wonder. Our ear is drilled to accent, and follows only where accent leads. Substitute in its place the basis of time, we are lost : as bewildered as Highlanders without their bagpipes. We liken your time hexameters to prose bewitched.

This error of taking a double manner of scanning for two distinct sources of metre has given rise to a false notion of the compass of our language as

vehicle for poetry. In truth, had we double means we should have a triple effect, for there would immediately result three distinct classes of poetry ; namely, by accent as produced by the whole suite of benighted jinglers from Chaucer to Byron : by time, as in the virtuous though unsuccessful attempt just alluded to, and by the transcendent effect of the two combined, as sighed after by the Doubletonians ; but the dual means are a mere dream, we have them not. Perry himself has declared that one of the two sources is not yet understood : our poets amply prove that it is not wanted : common sense rejects it as absurd ; and, being a mere creation of the prosodial brain, it may safely be pronounced never-to-be-understood. Hence again, English poetry has nothing to do with measure in length.

It is grievous to inflict the slightest scratch on national vanity, but it follows, as a corollary, from what has been said, that there is no ground whatever for attributing to the English language any supereminence with regard to poetic means. Had mistaken writers done no other harm than that of authorizing an ungrounded boast, the consolation were easy, on reflecting that the praise of our poets, for having taken so glorious a stand as they have done in the literature of nations, is by so much the greater as their means were less. But the flattering of undue self-love is not the only mischief done : our honest, legitimate national pride falls in with a rude rebuff. You may read in the works of foreign philologists, that *the English language has no prosody* ; no means of estimating an English verse. Now these foreign writers, before making this remark, had read our prosodies. This seems droll, reader ; it makes one

feel all I don't know how. Are our prosodies no prosodies? What if it should be true? To have but one way of measuring our merchandise was no great evil, since one way is enough, but to have no way at all! Why 'tis to be dullards, oafs, bereft of all bump of appreciation of values. Let us look into it. Send at once for the favourite author. Here he is. "PROSODY: dissyllables, trisyllables, polysyllables." And where are his monosyllables? Not a word about them. Can it be that an English prosody shall not treat of monosyllables, the first distinctive feature of our verse?

"To die;—to sleep;—

No more;—and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache."

Here is a verse and a half; six iambs and a pyrrhic, composed exclusively of monosyllables, and the writer has not a word to say on the subject? This argues ill. Let us look farther on. Ha! by his wind up, he seems to have satisfied himself at least. Read: "From the preceding view of English versification we may see what a copious stock of materials it possesses, for we are not only allowed the use of the ancient poetic feet in our heroic measure, but we have duplicates of each, agreeing in movement though differing in measure, and which make different impressions on the ear; an opulence peculiar to our language, and which is a source of boundless variety." Perryism, reader, pure Sheridanoperryism. Doubletonism. The disease has infected them all. He sees double: double riches because he has two ways of counting his bags. However, from such *copious stock of materials* I count that we shall at least find the means of constructing the heroic verse alluded to. Let us turn to it.

“ The fifth species of English iambics consists of five iambuses. Examples :

- “ How loved, how valued once avails thee not,
 “ To whom related, or by whom forgot.
 “ A heap of dust alone remains of thee,
 “ ’Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be.”
 “ Be wise to-day, ’tis madness to defer.
 “ Next day, the fatal precedent shall plead ;
 “ Thus on till wisdom is pushed out of life.”

What have we here? I see but one pure iambic in the whole group, and that is the third. The first has two spondees at the beginning and one at the end. The second has a pyrrhic for the third foot. The fourth is like the first. The fifth and sixth have their fourth feet pyrrhics. The last has two spondees, a pyrrhic, and its fourth foot a trochee. This augurs ill. Let us read the next article, which winds up the subject of the heroic line : “ This is called the “ heroic line. In its simplest form it consists of “ five iambuses, but by the admission of other feet “ as trochees, dactyls, anapests, &c., it is capable of “ many varieties.” Many indeed! why, it has no restriction! It is licence unlimited, capable of hundreds of varieties. But which among them make good verse, and which bad? That *et cætera* is exquisite: it equals the *et cætera* of Butler’s round-heads, who swore *et cæteras*. And this is all? This all? upon the English epic line? the nerve and bone of our higher poetry? “ *It consists, without the shadow of restraint, of sundry feet, &c.*” Only tack ten syllables together and your verse is made, for no possible combination of them will refuse to divide into five feet of some kind. Now the fact is palpable, that we have good verses and bad; and it has become equally clear that we have no means of distinguishing between them. Not only this augurs ill, reader, ’tis a complete nonsuit. We are beaten men: men con-

strained to submit and confess that THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE HAS NO PROSODY. These profound teachers have got so bewildered in running after the *ignis fatuus* of double scanning, that they have lost sight of the very object of the science on which they were writing, namely, to arrive at the art of making a verse. Let me tell you an old fable just to change the subject, for really this grows dolorous :—

Grasp all, lose all. Witness a dog,
 Who, swimming glibly o'er a tide,
 Bore in his jowl a piece of mutton prog,
 To bolt it quietly on the other side.
 Seeing his image in the stream, he thought
 Another dog a fatter prize had caught,
 And snapping at it let the solid go,
 The image of the mutton vanished too.

Dost see, reader? Æsop's meaning is as clear as day; the dog is Sheridanoperryism, the prog is English verse, the shadow is the double measuring system, and the lost mutton, I'm afraid, is our prosody. But let not thy good heart be dismayed. The English language is perhaps not so utterly destitute of prosodial rules as at this moment it appears. Dryden, Milton, Byron, all the men of the trade had their prosodies. 'Tis true the curmudgeons have kept it to themselves, and hence the opinion above noted of foreign critics who had dipped only into such printed nonsense as we have just read. But their prosody may be ferreted out. Two bits of Shakspeare and Milton, our two great models, have given me an inkling of their plan. I have picked up a few indications which might serve some handy fellow of the craft to make a prosody. I'll show them to you; if you are in that line and would set to work with new, solid, and homogeneous materials it might make you a name; you would be the man who served his country at her need, made her rich where she was

poor, and raised her to the rank of a nation not only poetical but scientific in the art of poetry.

Your plan would be this : first simplify the number of feet employed ; reject those of three syllables, since two of them necessarily make three feet of two syllables, and, if there be but one, contraction invariably reduces it to a foot of two syllables. Thus the number of feet to be considered is limited to four,—

The iambus, which is the measure of regular motion, the basis of the harmony, and which occurs four to one oftener than any other foot ;

The spondee, which is semi-iambic and retardative ;

The pyrrhic, which is semi-iambic and accelerative ;

The trochee, which is anti-iambic and variative.

As a general rule you may use these in any way you like, provided you do not change the metre, that is, make it become trochaic, or dactylic, or anapestic. Now spondees and pyrrhics have not that effect, and, therefore, are freely admitted to any foot of the line.

My observations then reduce themselves to the following expression in the form of a rule. I use the words *long* and *short*, they are familiar to the ear, but they are intended of course to imply accented and unaccented.

The spondee and the pyrrhic may occupy any place in the line. The trochee stands well on the first foot ; it enters the third and fourth, but cannot follow a short syllable ; consequently two trochees cannot stand together. The trochee is excluded from the second foot and the fifth.

Let me resume this a little, adding examples and observations. One of these will show a case admit-

ting a trochee on the second foot ; another which imposes a certain restriction on the spondee and the pyrrhic. First run over a few examples of pure iambs for the sake of comparison :—

The balmy call of incense-breathing morn.
A heap of dust alone remains of thee.
In these, thy lowest works ; yet these declare . .
The fairest she of all the maids of Troy.

You will observe in these a step of two by two. Spondees in any number make no change in this dual movement. The gravity of Milton's style will sometimes assemble three spondees in a line, as in the following :

Him first, him last, him midst and without end.
Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul.

The pyrrhic most frequently unites either with the preceding or following foot, forming with it a glided movement of four. One pyrrhic in a line occurs oftener than two : three are very rare, yet they do occur, and with good effect, if one be at each end of the line and the third in the middle. Examples :

He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber,
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
It was for Malcolm and for Donaldbain.

Two pyrrhics continuous require a pause between them.

Twice I demanded it, but was refused.

Without a pause the line becomes too hurried.

The sentence was not of my signing, but . . .

This reads much more like prose than verse.

A spondee between two pyrrhics at the head of a line makes triplet measure, to break which the line must end with iambs. This is the restriction as to spondees and pyrrhics alluded to in our rule. By

neglect of this restriction the following lines are triplet to the end.

Is it your pleasure to sign the report?
If he dies innocent, that is to say.

Iambi, in the places of the two trochees, *sign the* and *that is*, will restore the metre.

Is it your pleasure to peruse the deed?
If he dies innocent, be pleased to say.

The trochee is prettiest with a pure iambus after it. *Happy the man.* The two form a movement of four. The double foot is called choriambus, a measure of remarkable beauty. Those very words of our example suggested themselves to Pope as firstlings of his poetic pen. What an instinct, eh! You recollect, *Happy the man whose wish and care, &c.*

The following examples open with one choriambus, four gliding syllables, the rest two by two :—

Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk.
Into this breathing world scarce half made up.

The following have two choriambi contiguous ; two glidings of four :—

Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night.

This has two choriambi separated :

These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good.

Both these last forms are equally beautiful, with a pyrrhic in place of the second trochee :

Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow.

Now is the winter of our discontent.

The pyrrhic *ter of* has given to the second example a triplet beginning. If the beautiful choriambus were brought in at the end, it would ruin the verse, by setting a trochee after a short syllable, and making the measure all triplet, thus :—

Now is the winter of turbulent times.

A line may begin with two anapeests. This case, in which the first of the two anapeests is often impure, makes the exception reserved to our rule : it admits a trochee on the second foot.

With his guilt unavowed he'll die lamented.

The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades.

Dive, thoughts, down to my soul : here Clarence comes.

Here again, as before, the choriambus is excluded from the end of the line.

Let them meet when they will, I shall be found....

The trochee, *I shall*, composing the choriambus makes the line triplet throughout. Establish the iambus, or at least a pyrrhic or spondee, and you recover it.

Let them meet when they will, and me they'll find.

These triplet openings apart, a trochee in the second place is bad.

Ah! the devil come to insult the dead! Avaunt!

A vigorous line this, but the interjection *ah!* is too much for the metre. It throws an inadmissible trochee into the second foot, and makes the whole line trochaic. Efface the interjection, the trochee vanishes; the line becomes pure iambic. The following is triplet :

Like the faint exquisite music of a dream.

This comes from the trochee *music* after a short syllable. Introduce an iambus in its place, and you restore the measure :

Like the faint exquisite harmonious dream.

Take, as a wind up, a curious example :

Thirty-two years of nearly ceaseless warfare

With the Turk and the powers of Italy.

Each of these lines apart is a good line. Together they are absolutely prose. Why so? Because they are mutually discordant. The harmony of the first,

nearly pure iambic, is neutralized by that of the second, which is triplet from end to end.

These, reader, are the few materials I have been able to collect from the two thorough workmen, John Milton and William Shakspeare. I most cordially greet a flattering unction that arises out of this mass of examples, namely, that if our poetry has not a bow with two strings, it has a most elastic bow with one string. It bends to a great variety of effects, and this is arithmetical: the Latin heroic was established on two feet; ours varies on four. The inference is obvious. The foregoing examples, too, have developed in our heroic line three very distinct melodies: the dual as in the iambic and spondaic line; the ternary as in the opening of two dactyls; and the quaternary as in the choriambic line; all different, all beautiful: and this, for aught I know to the contrary, may be a trait peculiar to our language. With this comfortable reflection, let us wind up the subject.

I do not presume to assign the place of our English in the file of lyric languages. If we have some advantage in vigour of expression and in variety of tone, the Greek, the Latin, and the Italian surpass us in melody. The French, who both in variety and in force are below us in poetry of the higher order, excel us far in lighter composition, in the madrigal, the romance, the *chansonnette*. Pre-eminence and even origin in these is delightfully asserted by the noble and most tasteful author of "Moïse."

Mais n'oublions pas, s'il vous plait,
Le couplet.
Car c'est en France,
Assure-t-on,
Car c'est en France
Que la chanson
Et la romance
Ont pris naissance,
Pour être chères aux amours
Toujours, toujours.

One may risk attempting this in English, though generally these little bits of *naïveté* are inimitable. I never could touch a song of Béranger's.

But please to remember, I pray,

The *couplet*.

For it was in France

They say,

For it was in France

The lay

And the tender romance

Saw day,

From the loves ne'er to sever,

No, never! no, never!

French verse is a metrical phenomenon. It is grounded neither on time nor accent. Any six syllables, the last not mute, make an hemistich. Deprived of rhyme it ceases not to be harmony. Yet the poets of that nation reject blank verse, probably from the too great facility of composing it, or perhaps because their heroic verse is Alexandrine, which measure even in English seems unfit for blank verse. Mere rhyme even is not deemed enough, but the masculine and the feminine couplet must regularly succeed each other. It is sensible too that the mute *e* of the feminine termination is a pleasing relief to the ear. That mute *e*, which nevertheless is slightly pronounced, a trait peculiar to the French language, is the characteristic feature of French poetry.

To our English verse rhyme is not essential. Shelley has proved that it may be dispensed with in all measures from two feet to five. Nevertheless it is agreeable in all measures, which seems to imply less of harmony in our mere metre than in that of the Greeks and Latins.

Rhyme, I say, is agreeable in all measures, and, excepting the drama, is admissible into poetry of the highest order, but *nil nimis*: it is a question in my mind whether the triple and quadruple recurrence of

the same rhyme, as in the Spenserian stanza, be not rather a fatigue than a delight to the ear. Dryden, Pope, and their contemporaries, seem to have been of the same opinion. Byron and Shelley thought otherwise. Let critics decide, for that is their proper function.

OVID'S EPISTLES.



2.

Would the seducer, ere to Sparta led,
 Had perished in the sea !
 No sorrow here would fret in lonely bed
 At days gone wearily ;

3.

No needle toil the tedious night half through,
 Till hands and eyelids fail ;
 No pallid fear raise dangers worse than true :
 Torment is Love's entail.

4.

My fancy saw thee hemm'd with Dardan band,
 The name of Hector said :
 Trembling for thee if to his ireful hand
 Antilochus lay dead.

5.

Or did Patroclus, like Achilles armed,
 Meet fate amid success ;
 Or had the Rhodian's blood their javelin warmed,
 For thee uneasiness.

all Greece, and stood among the first of her warriors. *Penelope* was a Lacedemonian, daughter of Icarius. She is the great Greek model of the good and faithful wife.

Troy, or *Troja*, was before the war the greatest city of Asia Minor, and the capital of Troas, so called from its second king, Tros.

2. *The seducer* Paris, who by seducing Helen had given rise to the war, as we have seen in the Argument.

4. *Hector*, the bravest of all the Trojans and son of the king, Priam.

Antilochus, son of Nestor, king of Pylos. It appears, however, that Penelope is in error in attributing his death to Hector, it being due, according to history, to the hand of Memnon. Nothing, however, is more natural than that a stranger should be in possession of imperfect intelligence.

5. *Or did Patroclus, like Achilles armed*. Patroclus was the bosom friend of Achilles, the most valiant of all the Greeks, as Hector was the great model of all the Trojans. (See, On Achilles, Letter III.) The Greek hero having withdrawn from the war in dudgeon, offended by Agamemnon, the affairs of the allied forces suffered sad reverse. Patroclus then, in order to re-animate the troops, borrowed the armour of Achilles, represented his person, and in battle met his death by the hand of Hector.

The Rhodian. Tlepolemus, the son of Hercules and Astyoche, born at Argos, but called the Rhodian because he became king of Rhodes, after having fled thither to avoid the consequences of an accidental homicide. He fell by the hand of Sarpedon.

6.

In fine, my loving heart with cold would thrill,
 Whoe'er of Grecian fell :
 But our chaste love the gods protected still—
 Troy falls ; my husband's well.

7.

The Grecian chiefs are home ; the altars burn ;
 To th' gods their quota paid :
 Our women offering for their lords' return,
 Sing Ilion level laid.

8.

The good old men and timid virgins gaze,
 And wives while husbands tell.
 One on the board with drops of wine portrays
 The town and citadel :

9.

The Simois here, there the Sigæan land ;
 Here Priam's vast abode :
 This was Achilles', this Ulysses' stand ;
 There tearing Hector rode.

7. *To the gods their quota paid*, all due offerings to the gods having been made in the temples.

Sing Ilion level laid. In the Latin it is the husbands who sing. The change, to accommodate the verse, is of slight importance.

8. *While husbands tell*. While the husband relates the history of the war.]

9. *The Simois*. A river of Troas falling into the Scamander.

Sigæum. A promontory near Troy on which many battles were fought.

Here tearing Hector rode. This passage, *HIC LACER TERRUIT HECTOR EQUOS*, is ambiguous, the word *LACER* admitting either an active or a passive signification (tearing or torn), which present two very opposite pictures: the one shows Hector alive in all his martial rage; the other, Hector dead and dragged after the victor's car. To render this sense we may say, *THIS THE DRAGGED HECTOR'S ROAD*. It must be admitted that the greater number of commentators adopt the latter reading. We cannot, however, help siding in this case with the minority; the two last lines of the verse seem to parcel out the ground and set the two parties in view: Here was Achilles, here Ulysses, and there the adversary.

10.

Telemachus, while seeking thee in vain,
Nestor's long tale received :
How Rhesus too and Dolon both were slain,
One sleeping, one deceived.

11.

You risk, too, too forgetful of your own,
Into their tents to come ;
And slaughter hundreds with the help of one :
Much then you thought of home !

12.

How my heart beat until it knew thee free
With the Ismarian steeds !
But ah ! what profit, Troy a nullity
And on her site green meads,

13.

If but as when she was our state remain,
And no Ulysses here !
For all but me, Troy falls and Hector 's slain !
My tillage wants the steer.

10. *Telemachus.* The travels and adventures of Telemachus in search of his father, as given by Fenelon, are well known.

Nestor, king of Pylos, the oldest and, after Ulysses, the most acute of all the Greek chiefs.

Rhesus was a king of Thrace, who marched to the help of Priam. An oracle had declared that Troy was impregnable if Rhesus' horses drank of the Xanthus, the same river called Scamander, and fed on the Trojan fields. This known to the Greeks, Diomed and Ulysses were charged to obtain them. They entered the camp by night, slew Rhesus sleeping in his tent, and carried off the steeds.

Dolon, a Trojan of remarkable swiftness, employed to spy the Grecian camp. He fell into the hands of Ulysses and Diomed, who held out hopes of life to him on condition of his revealing to them the plans of his chiefs. This information obtained, they put him to death.

11. *Into their tents*, the tents of Rhesus' army.

12. *Ismarian.* Thracian, from Mount Ismarus.

13. *My tillage wants the steer.* My affairs want their principal conductor, yourself.

14.

Corn covers now the land of Troy bereft,
 Made fat with Ilian blood.
 Half buried bones are with the plough-share cleft.
 Weeds where the palace stood.

15.

Victorious exile, what can cause thy stay?
 Cruel, where dost abide?
 Here, every pilot from a foreign bay
 Meets question multiplied.

16.

Be any here addressed to Phrygian stand,
 A scroll departs for thee.
 Chance may . . . They've been to Pylos, Nestor's
 land:
 All dark uncertainty.

17.

Again to Sparta, Sparta knows no more
 Of where you may sojourn.
 Better were Troy erect as heretofore!
 Alas! I wildly mourn.

18.

Engaged in fight, the horrid chance of war,
 Like others I should fear.
 To dread one knows not what, is opening far
 Too wide a way to care.

14. *Ilian*, Trojan, from the citadel Ilium, named from King Ilius, who reigned after Tros.

16. *Phrygian*, Trojan.

17. *I wildly mourn*. It is a senseless wish to desire that my party had not succeeded in their enterprise.

18. *Engaged in fight*. Were you engaged in fight.

19.

Whatever dangers land or sea contain
 May cause this long delay.
Fool ! musing thus, while he perhaps is fain
 Some debt of love to pay :

20.

Describing home, the rustic housewife there
 In wool alone unrude.
No : let th' ungenerous idea melt in air :
 Here were he, if he could.

21.

My father quotes, to have me newly wed,
 The lapse of time gone by.
Let him : Penelope, thine ever said,
 Will knit no other tie !

22.

But he is gained by my persistent prayer,
 And curbs his lofty will.
Yet Samian, Zanthian, Dul'chian lovers dare
 Our house with riot fill.

23.

Here, uncontrolled they govern in your hall,
 Your substance at command :
Pisander, Metheon ; need I name them all ?
 Antinoüs greedy hand ?

19. *Fool* that I am.

20. *In wool.* In wool-working, knitting, embroidery, &c.

22. *Samos, Zanthos, Dulichium,* islands near Ithaca.

23. *Antinoüs* was the least ceremonious of all the suitors of Penelope. He advised to get rid of Telemachus, who supported his mother's courage. Ulysses first presented himself at home disguised as a beggar, and received a blow from this Antinoüs ; he was in consequence the first to feel the master's vengeance.

24.

A host there is here housed, blood-leeches all ;
 And, to top shame indeed,
 The pauper Irus and Melanth' they call
 Your steward fat their need.

25.

To three too feeble wards your house is left,
 Laerte, your wife, and son.
 Lately of him, by ruse I'm near bereft :
 He would to Pylos soon.

26.

Heaven grant that, in the common run of fate,
 He close our eyelids down.
 Same prayer our shepherd and old nurse oblate :
 Same prayer the swineherd clown.

27.

But not Laertes, near life's weary term,
 This inroad can withstand ;
 Telemachus will grow to years more firm,
 Now needing father's hand.

28.

To expel the foe myself, alas, too mild,
 Come you, our proper stead.
 My boy,—the gods protect him,—from a child
 Your ways inherited.

24. *Irus*, an Ithacan mendicant of vast corpulence, whom Ulysses, on his return, killed with a blow of his fist.

Melanthus, the supervisor of Ulysses' flocks, who culled all the fattest for the table of the suitors of Penelope.

25. *Laertes*, his father, now very old.

Lately of him by ruse I'm near bereft. By ruse of the suitors always contriving means to occupy Telemachus, and prevent his intended expedition in search of his father.

Pylos. There were three towns of this name all in Peloponnesus, and all laying claim to the honour of being the birthplace and domain of the venerable Nestor; that at the mouth of the river Alpheus seems, however, to have the preference.

He would to Pylos soon. He is secretly preparing his expedition to Pylos, contrary to the will of the suitors of Penelope.

29.

Think of Laertes: come his lids to close,
Too soon his end we'll see.
You left me a mere girl, and now, Heaven knows,
Nearing antiquity.

LETTER II.

PHILLIS TO DEMOPHOÖN.

ARGUMENT.

Demophoön, son of Theseus and Phædra, returning from the Trojan war and driven by tempest on the coast of Thrace, was received with hospitality by Phillis, who governed the realm as daughter of the late king, Lycurgus. Intimacy between the stranger and the queen grew to that of man and wife. After some months' residence, Demophoön receives news of the death of Mnestheus, a usurper, by whom his father, Theseus, had been obliged to quit Athens, his own rightful domain. Prompted then by the desire of reigning, he feigned a necessity of going home to settle his affairs, and pledged his word to Phillis that he would return in a month. Soon, his fleet being refitted, he sailed for Athens, nor ever returned. Four months afterwards Phillis addresses this letter to him, entreating that, mindful of past favours, he will not violate his plighted faith; and declaring that, were he to do so, rather than endure his slight, she would put an end to her existence.

1.

DEMOPHOÖN ! I, your once-loved Phillis, write,
Complaining slow delay.
You promised, ere the moon shone in full light,
To anchor in our bay.

2.

Four times her orb has waned, replenished four,
And no Athenian sail.
If you sum rightly (lovers tell the hour),
Not immature our wail.

3.

Hope lingered long : we believe not things we
Now, spite of me, they wound. [dread :
Imposing on itself, Illusion said,
" Wind south : he's hither bound ! "

4.

We've railed on Theseus for your journey stayed :
He perhaps no tie to home.
Meanwhile, lest Hebrus-bound, we are afraid
Of ships engulfed in foam.

5.

False one, how often is your welfare prayed
With incense in the fane !
How often, seeing the favouring breeze, is said,
" If well, he's on the main ! "

6.

Thus faithful love new causes of delay
Essays to invent and prove.
But, tardy still, oaths nothing draw this way ;
As profitless my love.

7.

Like sails, Demophoön, words to empty air !
Words false, sails all astray !
What have I done but loved too unaware ?
Is that your quarrel ? Say.

8.

Traitor ! one fault of mine, you here received,
The stamp of merit wore.
Where now hands joined,—faith plighted and
believed ?
Where all the gods you swore ?

4. *Lest Hebrus-bound.* Lest you, when bound for the river Hebrus ; that is, Thrace, my country.

5. *Is said* by me.

6. *Oaths nothing draw this way.* The oaths you have sworn do not make you come.

8. *Hands joined* in solemn promise of marriage.

9.

Where Hymen now, who was my pledge and stay,
For social years to bind?
You swore by Ocean, oft your dangerous way
O'er wave with every wind:

10.

Swore by your ancestor, who rules a sea,
Unless he too is feigned:
By Venus and those weapons, death to me,
Of dart or spark attained:

11.

By Juno who protects the marriage bed:
By mystic Ceres' fane.
Of all these gods my cause be seconded,
You'll sore abide the pain.

12.

Madly your fleet our artisans restore;
Adjust new wings to fly:
To bear you hence, we furnish sail and oar;
By our own weapons die.

9. *Hymen*, the god of marriage.

10. *Swore by your ancestor, who rules a sea.* She alludes to *Ægeus*, the father of Demophoön's father, Theseus, who drowned himself in the *Ægean Sea* through an imagined disappointment. Theseus, returning from his victory over the Minotaur (see Letter X., Argument) ought by agreement to have hoisted white sails to intimate to his father his victory over the Minotaur; this he neglected: the consequence was, that the old man, in despair, deeming him dead, threw himself into the sea which afterwards took its name from his, and fable has made of *Ægeus* a sea-god.

Of dart or spark attained. Cupid, the son of Venus and god of love, generally figures with bow and arrows to wound the heart, but torches or sparks are also attributed to him for the purpose of inflaming it.

11. *Juno*, the Queen of Heaven, presides over marriage.

Mystic Ceres. The goddess who presides over the fruits of the earth. She was daughter of Saturn and mother of Proserpine, whom Pluto carried off and made queen of Hell. The epithet, mystic, alludes to the secrecy with which her cult was performed by the priests, emblematical of her nightly search after her daughter.

13.

We trusted words, which lavish you repeat ;
 Trusted your house's name ;
 Trusted your tears ; can they have learnt deceit,
 Subservient to aim ?

14.

The gods we trusted : where have we no gage ?
 Too open to the snare.
 My house is not my grief, nor anchorage ;
 Would all had ended there.

15.

But to have passed from board to marriage bed,
 These arms in thine to have laced !
 Would that the yester'eve had seen me dead,
 While Phillis might die chaste !

16.

Hope flattered fair, as known my rightful claim :
 Hope merited is just.
 To cheat the simple is no hard won fame :
 Some favour 's due to trust.

17.

An easy woman fell to words so bland.
 Gods' will, this all your praise !
 Mid Ægean statues with your father stand :
 Him a step higher raise.

13. *Trusted your house's name.* Theseus, the father of Demophoön, by his exploits, stands second only to Hercules, and traces his genealogy up to Jupiter himself.

14. *Too open to the snare.* Too open as I was to your artifice.

17. *Ægean statues.* Statues in honour of your grandfather's family. (See note 10.)

18.

When of his Scyron and Procrust' 'tis read ;
Of Minotaur ; Sinis ;
Thebes taken and the Centaurs buffeted ;
The realm explored of Dis ;

19.

Thereafter your addition let them read :
Whom feeble Phillis believed.
Of father's actions, miming one misdeed,
The Cretan girl deceived.

20.

What palliation needs, you have retained :
Heir to his fault you are.
She, and I envy not, a better gained ;
Tame tigers draw her car.

18. *Scyron* was a robber famous about Megara ; *Procrustes*, another as notorious in Athens ; both were killed by Theseus. The latter is said to have had a certain bed in which to put his prisoners. If these were found too short, he stretched them to the length of his bed ; if on the contrary they were too long, he cut them shorter.

Minotaur. The Minotaur was a monster, half man half bull, killed by Theseus. (See Letter X.)

Sinis, a tyrant on the Isthmus of Corinth, who caused men to be tied to bended trees, which, being let spring, tore them to pieces.

Thebes taken. Thebes in Boeotia, in the destruction of which Theseus was eminently instrumental.

The Centaurs, a people of Thessaly, famed, from their early skill in horsemanship, to be half man half horse. At the marriage of Hippodamia, at Elis, the chief Centaurs were invited, and, warmed with wine, offered violence to the women. This caused a battle, in which they were overcome by Hercules, Theseus, Pirithous, and others of the Thessalian nation of the Lapithæ. They were afterwards nearly extirpated by Hercules.

The realm explored of Dis. Theseus accompanied his bosom friend Pirithous in an expedition to the infernal regions, the realm of Pluto or Dis, with a view to carry off Proserpine ; but this too hazardous enterprise failed, and they were both detained by Pluto till afterwards liberated at the intercession of Hercules.

19. *The Cretan girl deceived*. Ariadne, who was abandoned by his father Theseus. (See her Letter, No. X.)

20. *Heir to his fault you are*. Your father's fault, inconstancy.

She, and I envy not, a better gained. Ariadne, deserted by Theseus, was afterwards espoused by the god Bacchus, and thence rode in his car drawn by tame tigers.

21.

The slighted Thracian suitors we offend ;
 A stranger who prefer :
 Saith one, " Let her to learned Athens wend ;
 " To rule we need not her.

22.

" Ends declare acts." Who judges by the end
 Successful may he be !
 Did you again to Thracian waters tend,
 They'd laud my loyalty.

23.

Yet mine no praise, nor you my palace prize,
 Nor will my bay receive.
 That piteous look is still before my eyes,
 Demophoön's taking leave.

24.

You dared embrace, and on my neck impress
 Kisses drawn long and deep ;
 And mingle tears with mine, and show distress
 That Auster did not sleep.

25.

And at our parting these last words you spake :
 " Oh Phillis ! wait for me."
 Ah, wait ! you left me no return to make :
 Wait infidelity !

21. *Thracian suitors.* The noblemen of my country who seek my alliance.

Learned Athens, the country of Demophoön.

23. *Yet mine no praise.* No praise is due to me.

Nor will my bay receive. Receive you, since you have no intention to return.

24. *Auster,* the south wind, favourable from the Hebrus to Attica,

26.

And yet I wait. Come tardy to these arms :
 Be for a time untrue.
 Most wretched prayer ! there are some other
 Mine are a cloy to you. [charms :

27.

Once gone it seemed Phillis you'd never known ;
 Asked, " Phillis, who is she ?"
 One who, Demophoön, to a wreck here thrown,
 Gave hospitality ;

28.

Afforded means ; an indigent made rich,
 Fain ever to do more ;
 Gave him Lycurgus' wide dominions, which
 Queen-rule impatient bore,

29.

From icy Rhodope to Hæmus shade,
 The Hebrus-watered land ;
 But, more than all, first fruits of love who paid,
 Her zone loosed by his hand.

30.

Tisiphone behowled that marriage bed ;
 The night-bird hooted there :
 Alecto pale, with snakes about her head,
 A funeral flambeau bare.

29. *Rhodope, Hæmus*, both mountains in Thrace : *Hebrus*, a river of the same.

Her zone loosed by his hand. Taking off the lady's girdle on the wedding night was the finale of the ceremonies before possession ; as in France the cavalier of the bride's maid takes off the bride's garter previous to her retreat for the night.

30. *Tisiphone* and *Alecto*, two of the furies. The third was *Megara*. They were daughters of Night and the river Acheron in Hell.

The Latin sets funeral flambeaux in the picture, without placing one precisely in the hand of Alecto ; the change, however, to accommodate the verse, is unimportant.

31.

Nath'less by garish sun or chilly star,
Coastward the sea to find,
We roam o'er crag and fruit-clad hill afar,
Noting which way the wind.

32.

Whatever coming sails peer o'er the main,
"They are my gods," I say ;
Fly to the beach, nor for the surge refrain,
Breaking in frothy spray.

33.

They come. . Hope dies. 'Tis all another gear.
In th' women's arms I sink.—
There is a cove whose rounding horns come near,
Abrupt each headland brink :

34.

Would in its briny pool my sorrows toss'd !
Nay, such an end is nigh.
Bear me, ye waves, to his false-hearted coast,
A corpse before his eye !

35.

Harder than rock, or thy hard self, thou'dst say,
"Not so I'd see thee here."
Oft thirst we poison ; often could we pray
Transfixion by a spear.

36.

This neck too, in your false embrace that lay,
To cord owes well its breath.
Offended modesty its debt to pay,
Easy the choice of death.

35. *Harder than rock, or thy hard self.* Were you harder &c.

37.

use of my grave, thy name shall be writ over:

A verse the deed shall brand:—

Illis Demophoön killed ; the spouse the lover.

He author, she the hand.

Poor Phillis chose the cord and hung herself in despair.

~~~~~





## LETTER III.

### BRISEÏS TO ACHILLES.

#### ARGUMENT.

The first Greek expedition to the Trojan war, sailing by Lemnos, landed in Phrygia and began operations by attacking and destroying certain towns in the proximity and alliance of that whose capture was the grand object of their voyage. Achilles, son of Peleus and the sea-goddess Thetis, and who in prowess surpassed all the other heroes of Greece, was chiefly instrumental in the taking of Lyrnessus, where two beautiful women became his prisoners: the one, Chryseis, whom we know as Cressida in Shakspeare's play, daughter of Chryses, priest of Apollo; the other, Hippodamia, otherwise known by her family name, Briseis. Achilles cedes Chryseis to Agamemnon, reserving Briseis to himself. Chryseis being afterwards claimed by the priest, her father, and the Greeks enjoined by augury to give her up, Agamemnon, after long resistance and after severe inflictions from Heaven on the Greeks for his disobedience, consents at length to give up the maid, but insists, as being first in command, that Achilles shall cede to him his prize, Briseis. Achilles makes no resistance to this order, but retires in dudgeon from the war, nor can be induced by any entreaties to resume the fight. Magnificent presents are offered by Agamemnon, the first of which is his own Briseis, the subject of quarrel, but Achilles remains obdurate. Thereupon Briseis addresses this letter to him, reproaching him with the sin of excessive anger, and exhorting him to take arms against the common enemy, Troy; above all, to receive back herself, spontaneously offered by Agamemnon.

#### 1.

THESE from Briseis to Achilles sped,  
In Greek by foreign hand.  
The blots are burning tears abundant shed;  
They for sad words may stand.

#### 2.

Were it for me my lord to disapprove,  
I'd venture to say this:  
Though not his fault my expedite remove,  
One way the fault was his.

---

1. *By foreign hand.* Briseis, as an Asiatic, excuses her want of skill in Greek writing.

## 3.

: Talthyb' and Eurybates, that day  
 To have me hence they came ;  
 I did ; they, mutual glancing, seemed to say,  
 " Is this their ardent flame ? "

## 4.

ay were easy and of pain 'twere good :  
 Alas, no parting kiss !  
 solace but of tears a bitter flood !  
 A double sacrifice !

## 5.

to escape their guard it was my drift,  
 But enemies were rife :  
 ured detention, to be sent a gift  
 To some rich Trojan's wife.

## 6.

at matter ? of return no signs appear :  
 Your anger passes by.  
 hy weep ? " Patroclus whispered to my ear ;  
 " You'll come back presently."

## 7.

far from claiming, he'll not even take :  
 Love hard to comprehend !  
 nix and Ajax intercession make,  
 A cousin and a friend.

*Talthybius and Eurybates* are two emissaries of Agamemnon to Briseis.

*double sacrifice.* Once on becoming prisoner at Lyrnessus, and be yielded up to Agamemnon.

*What matter ? of return no signs appear.* What matter is it to ether I become a slave or not ? I see no signs of your love re- g.

*hænix*, the friend appointed by Achilles' father, Peleus, to be a r to his son. *Ajax*, being the son of Telamon the brother of , was first cousin to Achilles.

## 8.

And wise Ulysses, offering largess even  
To further my depart :  
Twenty brass cauldrons and of tripods seven,  
Egregious works of art.

## 9.

To these were added talents ten of gold  
And twice six matchless steeds ;  
Fair Lesbian girls, a needless gift to hold,  
Though won by your own deeds.

## 10.

With these, again superfluous, a spouse  
Of Agamemnon's three.  
You're paid to have me from the imperial house,  
And spurn the courtesy.

## 11.

Why doth Achilles deem Briseïs vile ?  
Whither, light Love, art fled ?  
On wretchedness will Fortune never smile ?  
Is mine unlimited ?

## 12.

We saw Lyrnessus burn before your hate,  
Whereof great part was I :  
Saw my three noble brethren meet their fate,  
Friends of my infancy :

---

10. *Spurn the courtesy.* Agamemnon's courtesy in restoring me, with even presents to boot.

12. *Lyrnessus.* See Argument.  
*Whereof great part was I.* Since she was wife of the reigning prince, Mynes, whom Achilles slew.

## 13.

Stout as he was, we saw my husband fall  
Expiring on your sword.  
Yourself became the compensate of all,  
Of country, brothers, lord.

## 14.

You swore to me by Thetis of the sea ;  
I went with fair design.  
Words ! words ! Now absent to abandon me !  
And even dowered decline !

## 15.

'Tis said, before the morning rays appear,  
You sail, howe'er the wind.  
Ah ! when the treason reached my wretched ear,  
I stood bereft of mind.

## 16.

You leave me, reckless spirit, and to whom ?  
What solace, when you're fled ?  
May earth engulf me in its yawning tomb,  
Or lightning strike me dead,

## 17.

Rather than Phthian oar should cleave the seas,  
Briseïs left behind !  
If that return to your *penates* please,  
Her no great clog you'd find.

---

14. *Thetis*, the sea-goddess, mother of Achilles.  
*Dowered* by the rich presents of Agamemnon, her own property being lost in the destruction of Lyrnessus.

17. *Than Phthian oar*: that is, your vessels, Phthia in Thessaly being the birthplace of Achilles.

## 18.

As captive let her follow, not as wife,  
 At wool-work no hand better :  
 Th' Achaian spouse in beauties the most rife  
 Will to your couch :—so let her.

## 19.

And worthy Peleus' race, whence Jove the head  
 Pleasing to Nereus too :  
 While we, subservient slaves, plying the thread  
 Work off the distaff clew.

## 20.

Let not your wife to hard dominion bear :  
 Meseems her aspect lowers :  
 Not in your presence cuff and rend my hair,  
 You joking,—“Once 'twas ours.”

## 21.

Let be : so here you leave me not to expire :  
 At that my spirits freeze.  
 What wilt ? Atrides now laments his ire :  
 Greece crouches at your knees.

## 22.

Subdue your anger, chief who conquer all !  
 Fell Hector's rage oppose.  
 To arms, Achilles, first true love recall !  
 Mars aiding, rout the foes !

19. *Worthy Peleus' race, whence Jove the head.* *Ægina*, daughter Asopus, king of Bœotia, conceived, by Jupiter, *Æacus*, who begat Pelus, the father of Achilles.

*Pleasing to Nereus too.* Nereus is one of the most ancient of the deities. By his wife Doris he had fifty daughters called the Nereids of whom Thetis, the mother of Achilles, was one.

20. *Once 'twas ours.* Once she and all her charms were mine.

21. *Let be.* Let it even be so.

*What wilt ?* What would you have ?

22. *First true love recall.* First recall me who am your true lover.

## 23.

For me you chafed, let me your anger calm :  
 Its cause be its surcease.  
 Let pride, a wife contented, feel no qualm :  
 Ænides armed for his.

## 24.

Althea, whom of brethren he bereft,  
 Damned him : the tale you know :  
 A war was then ; he, proud, his armour left,  
 Refused to strike a blow.

## 25.

Solely his wife prevailed ; too happy she !  
 My words are empty air.  
 No envy mine, who aped no wife's degree  
 When called the bed to share :

## 26.

Once, it reminds me, mistress termed, I said,  
 " For that name still more slave."——  
 Now, by the reverend bones of him that 's dead,  
 Which lie in ill-closed grave ;—

23. *Let pride, a wife contented, feel no qualm.* Let your pride feel no compunction for having given way to a wife.

*Ænides armed for his*, and the two following verses. Ænides or Meleager is the son of Æneus, King of Calydon and Althea. The fates presided at his birth, and promised an illustrious career ; but Atropos, one of the three, limited the duration of his life to that of a log of wood then burning on the fire. His mother, Althea, sprang immediately to the fire and snatch'd out the half-burnt brand, which she preserved with religious care. The most renowned of this hero's exploits is the Calydonian hunt after a monstrous boar with which the goddess Diana had afflicted the country, in punishment of some slight done to her deity. Meleager in this hunt slew the beast, and presented its spoils to Antiope, whom he loved. His uncles, jealous of this, would deprive Antiope of the skin : hence a combat, in which Meleager killed his uncles. This drew on him the imprecations of his mother, and caused him to refuse his aid on their city being attacked, but by the entreaties of his wife Cleopatra, he armed and repelled the invader.

25. *Nor envy mine.* Nor is envy mine, nor am I envious on that account.

26. *Now by the reverend bones of him that's dead.* Her husband Mynes, already mentioned in note to verse 12.

*Which lie in ill-closed grave.* Buried with the mass on the field of battle.

## 27.

By the three spirits of my brothers slain,  
     Who with their country died ;—  
 By both our heads which side by side have lain  
     And by that sword we've tried ;

## 28.

From the Mycenian is Briseïs free :  
     This solemnly she'll swear.  
 Achilles would an infidelity.—  
     Ah ! were it fit to dare

## 29.

Inquire, " My lord, hath he no love joy found ?"  
     He'd pause for a reply.  
 The Greeks have heard his lute's complaining  
     sound  
     Adoring some bright eye.

## 30.

And to the question, Why refuse the fight ?  
     " 'Tis music. War 's a bore.  
 " Safer in beauty's arms with finger light  
     " The trembling chords run o'er,

## 31.

" Than sword or battle-axe to strain the hand,  
     " Or casque encase the hair."  
 Yet formerly you loved the warlike band,  
     Their glorious deeds to share.

---

28. These four lines render two of the Latin text.  
*The Mycenian*, Agamemnon.  
*Achilles would an infidelity*. Achilles would rather that I had committed an infidelity.

## 32.

'Gainst me alone do feats of war delight?  
Dies glory with my soil?  
The gods forbid! Fall Hector in the fight!  
Be he your valour's foil!

## 33.

Oh Greeks, Briseïs send her lord to call,  
Kisses her words among:  
She'll more effect than Phoenix, Ajax, all;  
More than Ulysses' tongue.

## 34.

'Tis much in well-known arms to clasp the neck:  
The eye to say, "I'm here."  
Though dire, as Thetis' waves as slow to reck,  
You'd yield to one soft tear.

## 35.

(So may your father, Peleus, fill his day:  
Like you may Pyrrhus shine!)  
Oh, brave Achilles, turn me not away;  
Let not Briseïs pine.

## 36.

Is your love weary? Nay, then welcome fate.  
She cares no more to live.  
From you alone her health can emanate:  
Give hope, and life you give.

---

32. *'Gainst me alone do feats of war delight?* alluding to the conquest of her country, already mentioned.

33. *Phoenix*, &c. have been noted, verse 7.

34. *Thetis*, noted, verse 14.

35. *Pyrrhus*, the son of Achilles. See Letter VIII., *Hermione* to *Orestes*.



## 37.

Of hope bereft, Briseïs joins her kin.

    'Twere poor to answer, "Do ;"  
And needless too ; for, thrust a dagger in,  
    There's blood yet left for you.

## 38.

Thrust home that blade which, but Minerva  
    Had struck Atrides dead. [cared,

Ah ! rather give me life : when foe you spared,  
    Has love less merited ?

## 39.

Troy teems with higher game, worthier to slay :  
    Send foes to their long home.

But to Briseïs, or you go or stay,  
    By master's right say, "Come."

37. *Briseïs joins her kin*, who, as we have seen, verses 12 and 13, are all dead by the hand of Achilles.

38. *But Minerva cared*. Were it not that Minerva took care to prevent you. Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and war, watched over the interests of the Greeks, and withheld Achilles from harming Agamemnon.

*When foe you spared*. When you were our enemy you spared my life.



## LETTER IV.

### PHÆDRA TO HIPPOLYTUS.

#### ARGUMENT.

Theseus, the son of Ægeus, having overcome the minotaur in the labyrinth of Crete, was accompanied in his immediate flight by Ariadne and Phædra, the two daughters of Minos and Pasiphaë, the King and Queen, with promise to espouse Ariadne for the help she had afforded him in his undertaking. But admonished by Bacchus at Naxos, or as some say at Chios, where they had anchored by the way, he sailed, leaving Ariadne behind, and afterwards married Phædra. She, during an absence of Theseus, became enamoured of Hippolytus, her husband's son by Hippolyte, the most renowned of the Amazons. The youth, being insensible to her advances, and wholly addicted to the sports of the field, she addresses this letter, declaring to him her illicit love, and conjuring him to accept a union with her.

#### 1.

HEALTH, that with thee unkind herself would  
Thesid, let Phædra send. [need,  
Dumb characters can do no harm; then read:  
May be to please they tend.

#### 2.

Secrets thus told o'er land and sea are sped:  
A foe will read a foe.  
Essaying thrice to speak, thrice sound lay dead:  
Accents denied to flow.

---

1. *Thesid*, or *Thesides*, Hippolytus, son of Theseus.  
*Dumb characters*, the silent letters of the alphabet which compose her letter.

## 3.

Pudour with love, when feasible, ally :  
    They write who dare not say.  
What love demands unsafely we deny :  
    The very gods obey.

## 4.

I hesitated long : Love whispered, " Write ;  
    " Hard heart will yet join hand."  
Aid, Love, and as our vitals now ignite,  
    Let not his soul withstand.

## 5.

No plighted vow will I to falsehood turn :  
    Pure fame yet stands entire.  
Ask else. Late love is violent ; we burn,  
    Consuming in desire.

## 6.

The new-worked steer but ill abides the yoke,  
    The unhandled colt the rein.  
So the new heart will sore endure love's stroke,  
    Sorely my soul its pain.

## 7.

Those who sin young play safe their practised  
    It pains where love is late. [game :  
Thee wait the premises of maiden fame :  
    To both one joy one fate.

## 8.

'Tis sweet to cull the orchard's early store,  
    The primal rose to gain :  
But if that candour which we faultless wore  
    Be now to mark with stain,

---

5. *No plighted vow.* No vow that I shall plight to you.  
*Pure fame yet stands entire.* No reproach can be made on my conduct till this moment.

9.

'Tis well: we nobly burn. Unworthy flame  
 Were worse than lawless love;  
 And were heaven's queen to cede her god, I'd claim  
 Hippolytus 'fore Jove.

10.

Wouldst believe it? new delights allure me now:  
 To hunt the savage beast:  
 Delia's my goddess, of the silver bow,  
 Imbibing still your taste.

11.

For me the wood, to chase the flying hart,  
 To cheer the hounds along,  
 To hurl with steady hand the quivering dart,  
 To lie the woods among.

12.

Now to direct the car my virile pride is,  
 Making the coursers fly:  
 Now mad, like Bacchus-ridden Eleleïdes,  
 Or those who drum and cry:

13.

Or those again mid nymphs and satyrs thrown,  
 Touched by their power divine.  
 All these are told me, once the fury gone,  
 Whom love-flames undermine.

9. *'Tis well: we nobly burn.* There is no harm done, because I burn for a noble object, Hippolytus.

10. *Delia*, a name of Diana or Luna, the moon, goddess of field sports. *Imbibing.* I who imbibe or instinctively adopt.

12. *Eleleïdes*, the same as bacchantes, women worshippers of Bacchus, Eleleus being a name of Bacchus from the cry Eleleu, which is the same as the Hebraic Hallelu, used in celebrating his mysteries.

*Bacchus-ridden* implies excited by the libations of those ceremonies. *Or those who drum and cry.* Alluding to the worship of Cybele, thought the same with Ceres, goddess of harvest, whose ceremonies were also performed with various strange noises.

13. *Or those again mid nymphs and satyrs.* There was a belief, with respect to nymphs and satyrs, similar to our vulgar notions about fairies. Whoever had the misfortune to fall in the way of their revels became enchanted and moved by a certain rage.

## 14.

Haply our race with love's excess is curst ;  
 'Tis Venus' tribute paid :  
 Jove won Europa, of our race the first, -  
 The god a bull portrayed.

## 15.

Poor Pasiphaë, strange infatuated,  
 A monster yeaned to view.  
 The traitor, Theseus, Ariadne led  
 A deadly maze safe through.

## 16.

Myself, in fine, by right of Minos' race,  
 Am born like fate to see.  
 Two sisters in one house affection place :  
 One Theseus smit, you me.

14. *'Tis Venus' tribute paid.* Venus bore a grudge against all the race of the sun, from whom Phædra, by her mother, descends, on account of that luminary having exposed her intrigue with Mars. Hence she supposes Venus to inflict inordinate and unhappy loves on the whole race.

*Jove won Europa, of our race the first.* Jupiter, when king of Crete, became enamour'd of the beautiful Europa, daughter of Agenor, king of Phœnicia, and carried her off in a vessel whose ensign was a bull. Hence the fable that the god assumed the form of a bull, mixed in the flocks of Agenor, attracted the attention of his daughter, who caressed the beautiful animal and mounted on his back. The bull made towards the sea, took water, and conveyed his prize to Crete, where he resumed his own form and won the young lady's heart. The fruit of his amour was Minos, Phædra's father.

*A bull portrayed.* Appeared in the semblance of a bull.

15. *Poor Pasiphaë, strange infatuated.* Pasiphaë was the wife of Minos and mother of Phædra. Her infatuation was that of conceiving an unnatural affection for a white bull, a desire inflicted on her by Neptune because Minos had refused to sacrifice the animal on his altar. She accomplished her wishes by the help of Dædalus, an Athenian artist, the most inventive genius of his time. (See Letter XIX., note 13.) The fruit of this enormous amour was the Minotaur, a monster half man half bull, whom Minos, to hide his wife's shame, kept at Crete in an inextricable labyrinth.

*The traitor, Theseus, Ariadne led.* Ariadne led the traitor Theseus. Traitor on account of his conduct to her sister Ariadne, by whose clew he had escaped from the labyrinth. (See Ariadne to Theseus, Letter X.)

16. *Minos' race.* From Europa, the first of her race, to herself the last, she has shown that all the women have either burned with unlawful love or been victims to love-treason.

*One Theseus smit, you me.* Theseus inspired one with love ; Ariadne, you have smitten me in like manner.

## 17.

Theseus, Thesides, win two sister hearts,  
 A double trophy gained.  
 Would, when you came to the Eleusian parts,  
 In Gnossus I had remained.

## 18.

I loved you many a day before, but now,—  
 Oh heart ! oh dizzy head !—  
 Milk white your dress, roses confined your brow  
 Glowing sun-umbrated.

## 19.

What many call a rough severe aspect,  
 Determined Phædra deems.  
 Avaunt those fopling youth, like maidens deck'd ;  
 Plain dress the man beseems.

## 20.

How well your bold, dust-sprinkled brows befit,  
 And flowing locks behind ;  
 Or when in vigorous bound the steed you sit,  
 And close curvetting wind ;

## 21.

Or when, intent, I watch you, Mars-like, wield  
 The ponderous battle spear ;  
 Or the broad javelin hurl in sportive field ;—  
 Your every act is dear.

---

17. *Theseus, Thesides.* That is, Theseus and Thesides, Hippolytus, son of Theseus.

*Eleusian*, from Eleusis, a city near Athens.

*Gnossus*, a city of Crete and Phædra's home.

18. *Milk white your dress, roses confined your brow.* The favourite banqueting dress in remote times of Greece, as sung by Anacreon.

*Sun-umbrated*, sun-burnt.

## 22.

Leave but that roughness in the mountain wood,  
 Phædra needs milder chase :  
 High-girt Diana duly paid what good,  
 And Venus' turn disgrace ?

## 23.

Rest to the limbs you cannot safe refuse,  
 New force and verve to bring :  
 Unbend, for Cynthia's panoply you use,  
 The bow to spare the string.

## 24.

Cephalus was great in wood-craft ; when he shot,  
 Innumerable fell the slain.  
 For him Aurore her aging flame forgot,  
 Nor loved she quite in vain.

## 25.

Venus among the oaks Adonis led,  
 On the first sod reclined.  
 Cénides burned for Atalanta's bed :  
 To her his chase consigned.

22. *High-girt Diana duly paid what good, and Venus' turn disgrace?* What is gained by sacrificing all your time to field sports in honour of Diana and leave no moments for honouring Venus by love? *High-girt* is of double meaning: first, it may imply the girdle tightly braced for hunting; or secondly, her prim character, as we say stiff-laced, starched.

23. *Cynthia's panoply.* Diana's armour, the hunting weapons and dress.

24. *Cephalus was great in wood-craft.* Cephalus, son of Dioneus king of Thessaly, remarkable for his faithful attachment to Procris, daughter of Erechtheus king of Athens. Being a great hunter he was an early riser, and so handsome that Aurora was smitten with his beauty and bore him off. Whatever favours the goddess may have gained from the young sportsman,—and the text implies that she did gain some,—he remained faithful to first love and returned to his Procris.

*Her aging flame forgot.* Her husband, Tithonus, son of Laomedon and brother to Priam king of Troy. He in his youth had been snatched off by Aurora similarly to Cephalus and became her husband. He afterwards begged to be made immortal, and, by his wife's interest at the court of Jupiter, the favour was granted him. But he had forgotten to ask perpetual youth, and weight of years wearied him of life. The goddess, who could not make an immortal die, changed him to a grass-hopper.

25. *Venus among the oaks Adonis led.* Adonis was the incestuous offspring of Myrrha with her father, Cinyras king of Cyprus. He was

## 26.

Cited be our loves too : Cypris away,  
 Blithe were the woods no more.  
 Myself will come, nor shall the hills effray,  
 Nor rock nor fanged boar.

## 27.

Two seas their billows dash on th' isthmian strand :  
 You hear both waters moan.  
 We'll at Troezen live, Pittheus' land,  
 More pleasing than my own.

## 28.

Long the Neptunian hero will abide  
 With his Pirithoüs :  
 Theseus prefers, no verity to hide,  
 His friend to both of us.

## 29.

Nor this the only wrong of him be spoke :  
 We've both far worse to say :  
 My brother's limbs with gnarled club he broke ;  
 My sister cast away.

carried off by Venus on account of his extraordinary beauty. Being passionately fond of hunting, the goddess cautioned him against wild boars, and at last he met his death by one. (This mishap is sweetly sung in an ode attributed to Anacreon.) Venus wept, and changed the corpse into an anemone. His mother, Myrrha, who had fled to avoid her father's vengeance, became after death the tree which bears her name, the myrrh-tree.

*Onides.* Meleager, son of Ceneus, mentioned Letter III., verse 23.

*His chase.* The spoils won in the chase.

*26. Cypris away.* Cypris or Cypria are names of Venus, since that goddess is said to have risen from the sea near the isle of Cyprus. The name here stands for beauty, woman.

*27. The isthmian strand.* The shores of the isthmus of Corinth.

*Pittheus,* the maternal grandfather of Theseus.

*More pleasing than my own,* the land of Crete.

*28. Neptunian hero.* Theseus, son of Ægeus, is grandson of Neptune.

*With his Pirithoüs.* The close friendship of Theseus and Pirithoüs is cited like that of Orestes and Pylades.

*29. My brother's limbs.* The Minotaur, already mentioned.

*My sister cast away.* Ariadne abandoned like a wreck on the isle of Naxos. (See Letter X.)



## 30.

Thee bore the valiantest axe-wielding maid,  
 Well worthy each the other.  
 And where is she? Dead on great Theseus' blade:  
 Nor saved the son the mother.

## 31.

They by no wedded vow connect: and why?  
 That you might be no heir.  
 From me he gave you kin, whom all not I  
 But he ordained to rear.

## 32.

Would rather, dearest, than your right to bar,  
 Both birth and mother dead!  
 Go now: the worthy father's chamber spare,  
 So aptly vacuated.

## 33.

Nor, for a step-mother adores her son,  
 Let your soul feel dismay.  
 Such worn-out piety is well-nigh done:  
 'Twas old in Saturn's day.

## 34.

Jove wills for good and sanctions every tie,  
 Who his own sister led.

30. *The valiantest axe-wielding maid.* Hippolyte, queen of the Amazons: the battle-axe was their distinguishing weapon.

*Dead on great Theseus' blade.* It suits her to affirm that Hippolyte died by the hand of Theseus; but she is said to have been killed by an Amazon, when fighting on his side in the Amazonian war.

*Nor saved the son the mother.* Nor did the father's love for the child save its mother from her fate.

31. *Not I but he ordained to rear.* We are content now-a-days to drown "kittens and blind puppies;" the remoter ancients made no scruple of putting infants to death if they were blessed with too many.

32. *Both birth and mother.* Both the child and myself, an hyperbole of disinterestedness.

*By whom disherited.* By whom you are disinherited.

34. *Jove wills for good.* Whatever Jupiter wills is for the good of humanity.

*Who his own sister led* to the altar. Jupiter and Juno were own

men surely knit with lawful bond am I,  
By Cypria sponsated.

## 35.

or hard the fault to slur : ask Venus how :  
The filial name shall hide.  
ir warm embraces seen, warm praises flow ;  
Fit love on either side.

## 36.

or you no care, no nightly door : you have  
No keeper to deceive.  
me house as wont : an open kiss you gave,  
Same open kiss receive.

## 37.

fe then my love, nay more, eulogia due,  
Though on my couch you were.  
en cease delay. Oh promise to be true,  
Your heart so Cupid spare !

## 38.

ondescend as suppliant to pray :  
What will not pride endure ?  
confidently firm not to give way :  
Love, love, in nothing sure !

ther and sister, children of Saturn and Ops, who were begotten of  
Jum and Terra (heaven and earth). But Phædra's instance is rather  
ed, since the primal age had no choice, but brother and sister, to  
ke their matchea.

y Cypria sponsated. Given in marriage by Venus herself, who in-  
ves me with love for you.

i. *Nor hard the fault to slur.* It will not be hard to disguise our  
t.

he filial name shall hide. Your name as my son will hide all.

it love on either side. Our love will be regarded but as filial and  
ernal affection.

i. *For you no nightly door.* You will not have to enter my house by  
lth at night.

## 39.

Kneeling, my uplift hands beseech, oh, yield !  
 Love to all form is blind,  
 Is shameless. Modesty deserts the field.  
 Oh, bend that haughty mind !

## 40.

What boots my father, Minos, ocean sways ?  
 My line from Jove by birth ?  
 My mother's genitor invest in rays,  
 Whose car directs the earth ?

## 41.

Love levels all. Let me for them entreat :  
 Spare, if not me, spare mine.  
 We hold a dotal land, Jove's isle of Crete,  
 Hippolytus, as thine.

## 42.

Yield thy fierce soul. A bull's my mother broke :  
 Wilt be more hard than he ?  
 By Venus, my great god, I thee invoke :  
 So love be mild to thee !

## 43.

So the swift goddess in the woods thee guard  
 And aid the chase to near :  
 So may the fawns and satyrs round thee ward :  
 The boar fall to thy spear.

40. *What boots my father, Minos, ocean sways?* Minos, the King of Crete, being powerful at sea, is here said, like Britannia, to "rule the waves."

*My line, from Jove by birth?*

*My mother's genitor invest in rays.*

Phædra was of very high nobility, having Jupiter for her paternal grandfather, Minos being the son of Jupiter and Europa, and the Sun or Apollo for her grandfather on her mother's side.

42. *A bull's my mother broke.* Pasiphaë, already mentioned.

*My great god.* Of all the gods her whom I first adore.

43. *So the swift goddess.* Diana, goddess of the chase.

*So may the fawns and satyrs round thee ward.* May the forest deities have care of you in hunting.

44.

So may the nymphs, though thou despise them all,  
From burning thirst thee keep.  
To words I add my tears. Oh, read the scroll,  
And fancy how I weep.

**44. So may the nymphs.** The wood and water nymphs.

## LETTER V.

### CENONE TO PARIS.

#### ARGUMENT.

Hecuba, wife of Priam king of Troy, just before the birth of her son Paris, dreamed that she brought forth a burning brand which set all Troy on fire. Priam, alarmed at this, consulted the oracle, and received for answer that the son to be born would cause the destruction of Troy. He immediately ordered that the infant should be destroyed as soon as it came to light. Now Hecuba, when delivered of her son, was moved by maternal affection, and privately sent the child to be nursed by the wife of one of the king's shepherds, giving him the name Paris. Grown up, and himself become a shepherd, he formed an attachment with the wood nymph C  none, and married her. After this, there occurred a contest of beauty among the three great goddesses Juno, Minerva, and Venus, who had found a golden apple bearing this inscription: *To the most beautiful*. Their dispute was by Jupiter referred to Paris for judgment. The three goddesses, escorted by Mercury, appear before the young shepherd. Juno tries to bribe his favour by the offer of power, Minerva by that of skill in war. Venus offers him the most beautiful woman in the world, and to her he awards the apple. Paris, after this, is acknowledged by his father, Priam, returns home to Troy and soon prepares an expedition for Sparta, where he seduces and carries off the beautiful Helen, wife of King Menelaus, and conveys her to Troy. C  none, at news of this, complains in the following letter of his perfidy to her, strives to convince Paris that the safety of his country, as well as his own honour, demand that Helen be sent back to the Greeks.

#### 1.

WILL Paris read? or will his bride object?

Read, Paris, read it through.

Though no Mysenian hand the words connect,

They breathe a love too true.

#### 2.

C  none's in the Phrygian woods, thy spouse,

Who fain would say still thine.

What god hath set his hate against our vows?

What fault, alas! is mine?

---

1. The first two lines of the Latin are rendered by four.

*His bride.* Helen.

*Mysenian*, Grecian; the city of Mysene denoting the country of Menelaus and Agamemnon,

## 3.

Ills merited we bear, and in good part,  
 No pain unjust is mild.  
 [ deigned accept your humbly proffered heart,  
 A stately river's child.

## 4.

Priamides though now, poor servant then,  
 A nymph descends to wed.  
 How oft as shepherds in the shady glen  
 Lay we, turf-carpeted !

## 5.

Or when, hoar frost surprising us afield,  
 We sought the lowly roof,  
 Who taught what coverts hold the game con-  
 cealed ?  
 Where wolf-cubs lodge aloof ?

## 6.

Your mate in craft, the copse with springes lined,  
 Or coursing through the glade.  
 Oft now I read, ensculped on beachen rind,  
 CENONE, by your blade.

## 7.

And, with the trunk, CEnone's name expands :  
 Oh tree, the fruit retain !  
 There is a poplar, by a brook it stands,  
 Memorial of the twain ;

3. *A stately river's child.* The nymph CEnone was daughter of the river-god Cebrenus.

4. *Priamides though now.* Though you are now called Priamides or son of Priam. This mark of nobility Paris could not bear till he became the king's acknowledged son.

*Lay we.* Have we lain.

6. *Your mate in craft.* Wood-craft, sporting.

7. *The fruit.* The writing.

## 8.

Its ample trunk, rooted at water's edge,

This distichon doth show :

*When Paris lives false to C  none's pledge  
May Xanthus upward flow !*

## 9.

Back, Xanthus, back ! thy waters homeward roll :

Paris is false and lives !

That day declared my fate ; then felt my soul  
The chill suspicion gives,

## 10.

When Juno, Venus, and, more decent armed,

Minerve unveiled to thee.

Oh my poor heart ! no blood its arteries warmed  
Once told the mystery.

## 11.

Frighted, our aged men and wives I ask ;

All deem the omen curst.

Soon firs are hewn, keels laid, and, done the task,  
Launches the billows burst.

## 12.

Parting you wept,—real tears, you can't deny ;

Mean love ! now more than past !

You wept and saw my own o'erteeming eye :  
Our mingled grief flowed fast.

8. *Xanthus*, a renowned river near Troy.

10. *When Juno, Venus, and Minerva unveiled to thee.* Exposed their naked beauties to your judgment, as mentioned in the Argument. Minerva, she adds, was more decent when clad in armour.

11. *Soon firs are hewn*, to prepare a fleet for the departure of Paris for Lacedæmon.

12. *Mean love*, the love of me you now deem mean.  
*Long as in sight.* As long as your vessel remains in sight.

## 13.

Less clings the parasital vine to the staff  
Than you my neck entwine.  
Rating foul wind, you made the seamen laugh :  
The wind was most benign.

## 14.

How oft returned, one more last kiss to win !  
How faint you gasped " Adieu ?"  
• Flutters the sail in fine ; the oars dash in ;  
You glide the waters through.

## 15.

Long as in sight, unswerving rests my eye :  
Its tears the shingle wet.  
I pray the Nereids your return be nigh ;  
Nigh ! ay, to my regret !

## 16.

You come then for a stranger, not for me ?  
Alas, and of what kind ?—  
There is a peak o'erlooks the open sea,  
Breaking the flood behind :

## 17.

Thence first I recognise your sail, and now  
To plunge me in am prone ;  
Meanwhile there shines a purple on your prow,  
A purple not your own !

## 18.

Nearing, they slacken sail and strike the shore :  
Ye gods ! a woman's face !  
Nor that enough, my madness will see more :  
She clings to your embrace !

---

15. *Nereids*. Sea goddesses, daughters of Nereus and Doris.

17. *Purple*, that colour denoting nobility.



## 19.

Tw'as then I beat my breast, and with my nail  
 Furrow'd my deluged cheek ;  
 Fill'd holy Ida with phrenetic wail ;  
 Then my lone cave I seek.

## 20.

So Helen weep, deserted by her friend !  
 Who bring the ill should bear :  
 Well fit you such as o'er the ocean wend  
 Leaving at home despair.

## 21.

Cenone, you then poor, the herds who drove,  
 Was sole the poor man's spouse.  
 Wealth, fame she prizes not ; nor does it move  
 To be of Priam's house.

## 22.

Not that old Priam would a nymph reject,  
 Nor Hécuba despise :  
 Cenone, a great matron once elect,  
 Her mien needs no disguise.

## 23.

Nor for that under elms we lay, retrude  
 One fit for purple bed.  
 Briefly, with whom no war ensues but good,  
 Averting public dread.

19. *Holy Ida.* Mount Ida ; holy, as being often visited by the gods, and more particularly for the ceremonies there performed to Cybele.

20. *So Helen weep.* So may Helen weep.

*Leaving at home despair.* Helen has deserted Menelaus, and Paris Cenone, both disconsolate.

22. *Not that old Priam would a nymph reject.* The nymphs belonging to the class of immortals were deemed to confer high honour in espousing a simple terrestrial.

23. *Averting public dread.* The news being already known that all Greece was in arms.

24.

The fugitive is claimed with hostile arms :  
 Proud dowry for your couch !  
 She must to Greece again with all her charms.  
 Ask Hector : he'll avouch.

25.

What saith Antenor ? What doth Priam say ?  
 Their age men use to trust.  
 A sorry match with Menelas you play ;  
 Shameful your cause, his just !

26.

Nor deem Læcœna faithful, if you are wise,  
 So prompt with you to fly.  
 Loud as the husband now dishonour cries,  
 As loudly you will cry.

27.

Cureless to art is wounded chastity :  
 Pudour once soiled is dead.  
 Atrides, whom she loved precedently,  
 Enjoys a lonely bed.

28.

Andromache in Hector bless'd I call :  
 Myself were of her kind.  
 Thou, lighter than the leaves which sapless fall,  
 Art blown with every wind.

25. *Antenor*, a Trojan prince, then old, who was for restoring Helen to the Greeks.

*Shameful your cause.* Your cause being shameful, his cause being just.

26. *Læcœna*, the Laconian Helen.

28. *Andromache*, the wife of Hector, a model, like Penelope, of the good and faithful spouse.

## 29.

More forceless thou than ears of corn which hang  
Siccate in tepid air.  
Remember how inspired Cassandra sang,  
All floating loose her hair :

## 30.

"What dost, CEnone, sowing in the sand ?  
"Ploughing an arid plain ?  
"The Grecian heifer will destroy this land.  
"Gods, avert Ilion's bane !"

## 31.

"Immerge her filthy vessel in the wave !  
"Woes, woes o'er Troy impend !"  
They bare her off, unceasing still to rave :  
My hair stood up on end.

## 32.

Too true Cassandra's prophecy to me :  
Heifer my grove hath reft.  
Yet she's a harlot, lovely as she be :  
For him her gods are left.

## 33.

One Theseus, which it was I little wot,  
Bore her away, and strove,—  
Could he without success, so young and hot ?—  
Where learnt I this ?—I love.

---

29. *Cassandra*, daughter of Priam and Hecuba. She was a prophetess, and deemed half mad.

30. *The Grecian heifer*, Heleon of Sparta.

32. *Heifer my grove hath reft*. The heifer, Helen, has destroyed the peace of my grove, bereft me of my peace of mind.  
*For him her gods*, her household gods ; her home.

34.

s force, veiling the fault, you wish to say.  
 Oft rapt is willing rapt.  
 ne true to her false lord will stay,  
 In his own guise entrapp'd.

35.

Satyrs, I lay covert, nor in vain,  
 Sought me with rapid stride :  
 fir-crowned Faunus too, along the chain  
 Whose master peak is Ide.

36.

's builder loved me, he for music famed :  
 'Fore him by force I fail :  
 struggling, at his face sore scratches aimed  
 With rudely vengeful nail.

37.

claimed or gold or gems on Cynthius' part :  
 Shame were in such demand.  
 gave me knowledge in the healing art,  
 Chirurgic skill of hand.

38.

ev'ry herb and root the forests yield,  
 For sanant virtue known.  
 , that love is by no medicine healed !  
 Art fails me : even my own.

*fir-crowned Faunus.* Faunus, like Pan, was reputed a chief of the Satyrs.

*roy's builder.* Apollo, who is said to have raised the walls of the harmony of his lyre. (See note 17, Letter I.)

*ynthius* and *Cynthia* were names of Apollo and Diana, from Cynthus in Delos, the place of their great temple, and seat of hysterics.

## 39.

Pheræas, first in therapeutic love,  
Was stricken by my flame.  
Me earth nor heaven can sanity restore :  
No hope but in thy name.

## 40.

Thou canst : I merit. Oh, then stand between  
Despair and my poor breast.  
Thine I was once, now am, have ever been,  
And ever pray to rest.

---

39. *Pheræas*, like Apollo, was expelled from heaven by the wrath of Jupiter, and, like him, became a shepherd. He devoted himself to medicine, as Apollo to the fine arts in general.

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LETTER VI.

HYPSIPYLE TO JASON.

ARGUMENT.

Pelias, the son of Neptune by Tyro, a princess, afterwards married to Cretheus, king of Iolchos, usurped that throne at the death of the monarch to the exclusion of Æson, his half-brother, and the rightful heir as son of Cretheus. The new king was warned by an oracle, that he would be in danger of death if ever, in going to sacrifice to his father, he should meet a man barefoot. After a time, it happened that, going to perform this sacrifice, he met Jason, son of his half-brother Æson, and consequently presumptive heir to the throne of Iolchos, who had lost his shoes in the mud of the river Anaurus. Pelias then, mindful of the oracle, persuaded Jason to go to Colchos in quest of a certain golden fleece of magic virtue, and guarded in a supernatural manner, hoping that he would never return, since the enterprise was deemed too much for human strength. Jason, possessing magnanimous courage, willingly undertook the task. To that end he assembled a company of the most enterprising youth of Greece, and set out on a voyage, such as had never been attempted by the Greeks before. The fleet on its way brought up at Lemnos, where previously a tragedy had been done, similar to that of the daughters of Danaus: the women of the place had killed all the men. Our heroes were hospitably received by Hypsipyle, the queen, who from this general slaughter had saved her father, Thoas. Here the Argonauts remained two years; formed connections with the women. Jason attached himself to Hypsipyle and married her. Roused at length by the complaints of some of his comrades, more active or less attached than himself, he resolved to depart, and set sail, leaving Hypsipyle pregnant. They arrived safe at Colchos the end of their voyage, where, by the art of Medea, a great sorceress, daughter of Æetes, king of the place, and who had fallen in love with him, Jason overcame all obstacles, a sleepless dragon, bulls breathing fire, and other dangers. He obtained, in fine, the golden fleece, and sailed off with his prize, Medea herself abandoning all to accompany him. Hypsipyle, in this letter, indignant at Medea's coming, sarcastically congratulates Jason on his safe arrival, accuses him of having treacherously supplanted her by Medea, and ends by pronouncing her malediction on both of them.

1.

IN Thessaly we hear your Argo moored,
Rich with the golden fleece.
Accept, if such may be, a greeting word.
Was't much to write me this ?

1. *In Thessaly*, your native country.

2.

For not returning as proposed, the wind
 Might feasibly not serve.
 Howe'er it blow, a word may be consigned :
 "All hail" we might deserve.

3.

Whence comes it fame is foremost to apprise
 Mars' oxen take the yoke ?
 That from seed cast grim warriors arise
 And fall by mutual stroke ?

4.

Whence that a dragon, guardian of a fleece,
 Was mastered by your act ?
 Oh, could I set the hard of belief at ease,
 Saying, "He writes the fact."

5.

But wherefore of mere laxity complain ?
 Great is my task if thine,
 A murderess, by report, you entertain,
 In that bed plighted mine.

6.

Yet love is credulous : would men could say
 My husband false impeached.

3. *To apprise*, to apprise me that, &c.

4. *Mars' oxen take the yoke*. The conditions proposed by *Crestes* for his rendering up the golden fleece were three : first, certain wild bulls sacred to Mars, and of preternatural power and fierceness, should be tamed and brought to the yoke ; second, that serpents' teeth were to be planted, from which armed men would arise to the destruction of the sower ; and, lastly, that a dragon, immediate guardian of the fleece, and which never closed its eyes in sleep, should be surprised or destroyed.

5. *A murderess, by report, you entertain*. This is Medea, mentioned in the Argument, and of whom more will be found in Letter XII., from her to Jason. In her flight from home to follow Jason she took with her a young brother, the boy Absyrtus ; but to arrest her father's pursuit, who was following closely, she killed the child, cut him to pieces, and strewed his limbs on the road. The old man's attention thus horribly occupied, she escaped to the fleet.

guest late come from an Hæmonian bay
Had scarce our threshold reached :

7.

stant, "How is my Jason?" I inquire ;
And, seeing his downcast eye,
iterate, mad with ills that may transpire,
"Lives he? or must I die?"

8.

le lives," quoth he. I make the speaker swear,
Doubting his very vow.
peased, then hear him all your acts declare ;
As, how Mars' oxen plough :

9.

w serpents' eeth are sown for seed of life,
And armed men enate :
e earth-born race, extinct by civil strife,
Fill their ephemeral fate.

10.

he serpent slain," I cry, "is Jason well?"
With hope and fear combined.
order, thus continuing still to tell,
He shows your wavering mind.

11.

ere, where is plighted faith? Where wedded
Torch worthier funeral pile! [vows?
rs was no stealthy match good Juno knows ;
Hymen approved the while.

Hæmonian. Thessalian, from Mount Hæmus.

He shows your wavering mind. Relates to me your amour with
ca.

Torch worthier funeral pile. The flambeau being used in funeral
essions as well as in marriage ceremonies.

ymen approved the while. That is, our marriage was performed
all due ceremony.

12.

Juno nor Hymen, but Erynnys brought
 Ill-omened torch to me.
 Would Argo I'd ne'er seen nor Argonaut,
 Or ne'er been seen of thee.

13.

Here was no ram in golden wool arrayed,
 Nor Æetes' palace here.
 I had resolved (but adverse fate betrayed)
 To drive your troop elsewhere.

14.

The wives of Lemnos well can overcome :
 With them secure I lay.
 A stranger wins my heart, invades my home,
 Two summers there to stay :

15.

'Twas the third spring when, forced to take ship
 Commingling tears with mine, [board
 You said, "Hypsipyle, the Fates accord
 "Return, I'm ever thine.

16.

"Live that dear pledge, the solace of our soul,
 "We're parents of one fruit."
 This said, a flood of tears wound up the whole :
 Your parting grief was mute.

17.

Last you ascend the sacred vessel's side :
 The canvass holds the wind :
 The waters ceding, wider and more wide
 The space you leave behind.

12. *Juno nor Hymen, but Erynnys.* Neither Juno nor Hymen, the protectors of marriage, were there, but Erynnys, the fury, to bring out and misfortune.

14. *The wives of Lemnos well can overcome.* Alluding to the de mentioned in the Argument, when the women of that city killed the men.

18.

bosom bathed in tears, I mount on high
 A turret, in the hope
 extend my view, and there through humid eye
 Obtain a wider scope.

19.

re utter prayers and vows with fear oblate,
 Now due to th' gods above.
 pay ; Medea gets. Ah, cruel fate !
 Offended, still to love !

20.

h gifts we bring for losing you alive ;
 Burnt offerings 'gainst our peace.
 ety was never mine, fearing you'd wive
 By Æson's act in Greece.

21.

os my dread, unlooked-for ill befell :
 A foreign trull my wound !
 uty nor merit hers to win, but spell,
 Dire roots in magic ground !

22.

works to turn the struggling moon aside :
 Envelope Sol in gloom.
 ong to bind waves, divert the flowing tide :
 Rocks before her give room.

23.

nt all dishevelled in the tombs to stray,
 Bones at the pyre to pick.
 moulds the effigy of those away,
 Pins in their heart to stick.

We pay; Medea gets. I pay rich gifts in the temple, and of which
 she enjoys the advantage in possessing you, the object of my offerings
 and prayers.

Æson. His father.

A foreign trull. Medea.

t spell. She works by incantation.

To envelope Sol in gloom. To cover the sun with darkness.

24.

And, horror ! love, which form and manners gain,
 She wins by herbs and sleight :
 And you can kiss and on her couch remain ?
 And sleep unscared the night ?

25.

Even like your bulls, she makes you bear the
 Or like your serpents tame. [yoke,
 That her vile name among his deeds be spoke,
 She 'll mar her lover's fame.

26.

Some Pelian chief her poisoning aid will quote,
 And suffrages obtain :
 Not Jason but Medea's wiles the coat
 O' th' golden bident gain.

27.

Alcimedé approves not, nor your sire,
 Their daughter of the north.
 Let her up gelid Tanaïs inquire
 A match to suit her worth.

28.

Inconstant Jason, changeful as the air,
 How light your pledges weigh !
 Mine you went hence ; mine you no longer are :
 The wife has had her day.

26. *Some Pelian chief.* Some chief of the party of Pelias, who is your enemy, and provokes dangerous enterprises to get rid of you.

The coat of the golden bident. See Letter XII. verse 2, a note on the golden fleece.

27. *Alcimedé.* Jason's mother.

Their daughter of the north. Medea, whose country, Colchis, lies somewhat more north than Greece.

Gelid Tanais. The river Tanais separates Asia from Europe, rises far in the north, and falls into the Euxine. The writer uses exaggeration in painting Medea's country as a wintry climate.

So, *to suit her worth*, is bitter irony.

29.

Dost value birth ? high lineage to own ?
 Minos and Thoas mine ;
 And Bacchus, in whose Ariadne's crown
 Bright flames constellate shine.

30.

Lemnos my dower, a genial soil to till,
 Myself the boon augment.
 You are father, Jason ; oh rejoice, you still
 Made sweet the burden sent.

31.

Bless'd too in number : the dear birth is twain :
 Lucina graced desire.
 " Like whom ? " say you. They know not how to
 In all else like their sire. [feign :

32.

They my ambassadors had near been sent :
 Medea barred their way.
 Medea, worse than step-dame, ever bent
 New horrors to assay.

33.

She who her brother's limbs abroad could strow,
 Would she my babies spare ?
 And yet with her, oh, mad by spells who grow,
 Hypsipyle's bed you share.

29. *Minos and Thoas mine.* Thoas, her father, was the son of Ariadne and Bacchus. Ariadne, as we have seen, was Minos' daughter.

Bright flames constellate shine. Bacchus is said to have given Ariadne a crown composed of brilliant stars, which after her death became the constellation known by the name of the Northern Crown.

30. *Lemnos my dowry.* She now reigns as queen of Lemnos.

31. *Lucina.* Daughter of Jupiter and Juno ; or, as some think, it is a name either of Juno herself or of Diana, since she presides over child-birth.

32. *Medea barred their way.* The danger of Medea's wickedness was an obstacle to my sending them.

33. *She who her brother's limbs abroad could strow.* See note 5.

34.

She hath a man impurely and by theft ;
 I holily possessed.

She sold her father ; I saved mine : she left
 Her friends ; I Lemnian rest.

35.

Is 't slight, a jilt an honest wife betrays ?

 By crime deserves a man ?

The Lemnian deed, Jason, I blame, not praise :
 Grief takes what arms it can.

36.

Suppose—ah, would it were !—you both, here set
 Storm-driven within our bay,

Hypsipyle and her twin offspring met :

 “ Engulf me earth ! ” you'd pray.

37.

Before us, wretch, what face your turn would

 What death were then your due ? [serve ?

Yet you were safe, not for that you deserve,

 But that we are meek for you.

38.

In strumpet-blood, though, both these hands I'd

 Your visage too, hell-bound. [dye ;

Medea to Medea ! for, Jove on high

 Be just to justice found,

34. *She sold her father.* By betraying to Jason the secrets of the golden fleece, and helping him with her magic. See verse 3.

I saved mine. From the general murder at Lemnos, mentioned in the Argument.

She left her friends. To follow Jason.

35. *The Lemnian deed.* The murder of the men by the women, as noticed in the Argument. This act arose out of jealousy. Hypsipyle disapproves it, deeming it not to have had sufficient motive, yet palliates it as having arisen from grief, and brings it forward in order to show in the next verse what would be the due of Jason, who has given ample motive for revenge.

37. *You were.* You would be.

38. *In strumpet-blood.* In the blood of Medea.

Hell-bound. You, Jason, who are bound by the hellish incantations of Medea.

Medea to Medea. To Medea I would be a murderess like herself, and put her to death.

39.

what Hypsipyle wails she'll be exposed,
And dearly pay her theft.
I, wife, doubly mother, am deposed,
Be she alike bereft.

40.

long to hold her gain, but, worse deprived,
Bear far a banished life :
sister and bad daughter she has lived,
Live she as bad a wife.

41.

d, sea denied, the air let her assay,
Front-stained with murder red :
se Thoas' daughter wronged shall ever pray :
Curses on both your head.

*To what Hypsipyle wails she'll be exposed. To being deserted by
a prophecy which the twelfth letter shows fulfilled.*

LETTER VII.

DIDO TO ÆNEAS.

~~~~~ ARGUMENT.

After the destruction of Troy, Æneas, the son of Venus and Anchises, having saved from the flames his household gods, his old father Anchises, and his son Iulus (his wife Creusa being lost by the way), collected a fleet of twenty sail, and put to sea. Driven by tempests through many disasters along various coasts, he attained at length that of Africa, whither, according to Virgil's delightful anachronism, Dido, the daughter of Belus king of Tyre, and widow of Sichæus, priest of Hercules, had previously fled from the danger of her brother, the king Pygmalion, whose avarice had urged him to murder her husband in order to obtain possession of his vast wealth, and whose intentions towards herself were suspected. Here Dido had lately founded the city of Carthage. She received Æneas and his companions in distress with the largest hospitality; became deeply in love with the chief; and at length too liberal of her favours. The stay of the squadron prolonged itself indefinitely. Warned, however, at length, by Mercury that Italy is the country allotted to him, Æneas prepares to follow his destiny, and seek the predicted shore. Dido, from whose enamoured soul no thought escapes, guesses his intention, and endeavours to dissuade him from carrying it into effect; failing in this, she supplicates him at least to defer his departure a little longer. All her endeavours failing, she resolves to die, and addresses this last complaint to her lover that he may recognize in himself the cause of her desperate act.

~~~~~ 1.

As the poor swan, fate-called, to Meander in vain
Pours forth his dying lay,
Elissa calls to thee ; hopeless of gain,
To adverse gods we pray.

2.

Of honour, peace, and pudic shame bereft,
Words lost we scathless bear.
You surely go ; Dido as sure is left.
Sails, oaths, are food for air.

1. *Elissa*, another name of Dido.

2. *Words lost*. Those which I now write.

3.

Swass and vows alike you give the wind
 For far-off Italy:
 Carthage and her wealth no favour find,
 Nor throned security.

4.

And fly what's done, seeking what's yet to do,
 Seek ground! 'Tis here your own.
 And it elsewhere, who is to give it you?
 Give! to a chief unknown!

5.

Another love, another Dido, calls,
 Another to deceive.
 When wilt a Carthage citadel and walls
 In Italy achieve?

6.

Let it done, let all to fortune turn,
 Where love like mine attain?
 As a wax flambeau, sulphur-primed, to burn?
 As incense in the fane?

7.

Æneas ever present to my thought;
 Æneas night and day:
 But, deaf to favour, were I not distraught
 He better were away.

8.

But I'd not hurt him; rather work him bliss:
 Love has nor bound nor laws.
 Spare me, Venus; his hard brother kiss:
 Make Cupid fend my cause.

Nor throned security. Nor the secure throne of Carthage which I find you finds any favour in your sight.

Let all to fortune turn. Suppose all to turn out fortunately.

His hard brother. Cupid, the god of Love, his brother, as being the son of Venus, is always represented as enjoying the pain he inflicts.

9.

Grant him I love and still to love am fain :

Let him my ache remove.

Oh, blind ! the image flitted through my brain :

Love-born, he 'll never love !

10.

Of mountains he or rugged rocks enate,

By savage tigers bred ;

Or of that sea the winds now agitaté,

Whither anon he's led.

11.

Whither ! in winter ! Winter is my friend :

How Eurus moves the flood !

What you might give, the gentler tempests lend,

Oh, more than ocean rude !

12.

Are we so dread, unjust, that, risking fate,

O'er the wild sea you fly ?

'Tis exercising a too costly hate

If to lose me you die.

13.

The storm will cease, and Triton o'er the main

His sea-blue coursers wheel.

Oh, like the storm, be you appeased again :

You will, if not of steel.

14.

Trust to the waves, knowing what waves can do !

How had you never tried ?

Even to smooth sea, who let their halser go

A thousand ills abide.

9. *Grant him I love.* Grant me possession of him whom I love.
Love-born. Being the son of Venus, Queen of Love.

13. *Triton*, the son of Neptune. He had great power over the sea, and could at all times calm its waves.

14. *How had you never tried.* What would be your rashness, had you not the experience of danger ?

Who let their halser go. Those who, &c.

15.

Of oath-breakers the ocean 's to be feared :
 Rarely to treason good.
 Love treason too, for Venus came upreared
 From Cytherean flood.

16.

I fear to hurt who hurts ; the lost to lose ;
 A foe's misfortune dread.
 Live, live Æneas lost, we rather choose
 Ill fate unmerited.

17.

Conceive a hurricane, your ship's distress :
 What image haunts your mind ?
 The subtle perjuries of your false address :
 Dido to death consigned.

18.

Your cheated consort's form before your eye,
 Blood-stained her vesture through.
 " Back ! back ! I have deserved it all," you cry ;
 And deem each flash your due.

19.

Pause but a while for ocean's rage to cool :
 Safety is in delay.
 If not for my sake, pause for young Iule :
 One is enough to slay.

15. *From Cytherean flood.* From the sea near the island of Cythera.

16. *I fear to hurt who hurts ; the lost to lose.* I fear to injure you who injure me. I fear to lose you who are lost to me already.

A foe's misfortune dread. Yours, who by abandonment are become my enemy.

Æneas lost. Lost to me.

18. *Your cheated consort.* Myself.

And deem each flash your due. And deem each flash of lightning directed against yourself,

20.

What hath Ascanius, what your gods deserved,
 From fire escaped to drown ?
 But no ; you neither gods nor sire preserved,
 Borne from the blazing town.

21.

Invention all ; nor this your first essay,
 Nor we the first to moan.
 Where is the mother of Iulus ? say :
 Missing. She walked alone.

22.

All this you told : me pity moved, and thence
 Your solace to my cost.
 No marvel now that for the gods' offence
 Seven years you 're tempest-toss'd.

23.

Here cast ashore, you find my port a home,
 A stranger yet in name.
 Would that the tenderer kindness ne'er had come,
 Or death with loss of fame !

24.

Fatal that day, storm-driven, obliged to fly,
 When in the cave we sate.
 Voices were heard, then deemed the wood nymph's
 'Twas hell howling my fate. [cry :

20. *Ascanius*. Another name of his son Iulus.

Gods. The images of his household gods.

From fire escaped to drown. Escaped from burning Troy to be drowned by shipwreck.

21. *Where is the mother of Iulus ?* Æneas, loaded with his father on his shoulders, led his son by the hand ; his wife Creusa followed behind, and at the end of their march was found missing.

22. *Your solace to my cost*. Your solace, by my receiving you in hospitality : to my cost, since you gain my heart and abandon me.

The gods' offence. She hints that he must have got rid of his wife Creusa unfairly.

25.

Oh pudour, to Sichæus violate,
 Avenge ye on my breast!
 In marble is Sichæus consecrate,
 Him fleece and herbs invest.

26.

Four times was heard a call's familiar tone :
 " Elissa, come ! " it said.
 A little while and I will come, mine own !
 Oh, call too long delayed !

27.

Pardon, dear shade, a fault no mean desire :
 Let that avert my blame.
 Celestial born, who saved his gods and sire,
 Gave earnest of fair flame.

28.

If error be, 'tis venial,—plighted love ;
 A love not made to grieve.
 The lot which was, that lot again to prove,
 While we united live.

29.

Sichæus in the fane of life bereft
 By his despoiler's hand,
 I fled, his ashes and my country left,
 Pursued throughout the land.

25. *Oh pudour, to Sichæus violate.* Violated towards her late husband by her amour with Æneas.

Him fleece and herbs invest. His statue in the tomb is decorated with wool and herbs. So, in Catholic countries, they still adorn tombs with flowers.

26. *A little while and I will come.* Presently, by death, Sichæus, I will come.

27. *Celestial born.* Æneas being the son of Venus.

28. *The lot which was.* My lot of happiness when your wife, Sichæus.

That lot again. Of happiness, were I to espouse Æneas.

29. *Sichæus in the fane of life bereft.* Sichæus was stabbed by Pygmalion in the temple of Hercules.

30.

Escaped the sword, seas crossed, domains
 Traitor, to found for you. [bou
 A city built, and walls extensive wrought,
 Envied the region through.

31.

War threats, we undertake our town's defence
 Though scarce portcullis down :
 Unnumbered suitors vie, who take offence
 At a preferred unknown.

32.

Why not to black Iarba give me bound ?
 These hands are offered free.
 Or him who struck Sichæus his death wound
 He'd do as much for me.

33.

Talk not of gods, foul touch awakes their wrath
 They loath an impious hand.
 You saving from combustion, they were loth
 To quit the burning brand.

34.

Haply your Dido pregnant here you leave,
 In her your pledge innate.
 With mother's misery a son's achieve,
 The embryo of ill fate.

35.

Of our two destinies complete the sum,
 In one destruction found.

31. *A preferred unknown.* Yourself, Æneas.

32. *Iarbas*, a prince of Getulia, in the interior of Africa.
Or him who struck Sichæus his death wound. Or to him, her brother
 Pygmalion.

33. *You saving.* Were your hand to save them.
They were loth. They would be loth.

And bids go ! would he'd forbid to come,
And tread the Punic ground.

36.

by a god, you drive with adverse wind
An ever-changing way.
were less sought, though men her crenels
Thick as in Hector's day. [lined,

37.

Simois stream attracts, but Tiber's shore,
To settle there, a guest.
still the more you seek it flies the more :
Found when long years need rest.

38.

hesitating make my realm your own,
Pygmalion's wealth to bring.
prier that Ilium change to Punic town,
And thou to Tyrian king.

39.

war you thirst ? or would Iulus know
Where honours are to seize ?
ll find him enemies to overcome,
Business of war or peace.

40.

Jenus, Cupid, and those gods who are
Companions of your way,
ity,—(so thrive all your fate who share ;
So end your evil day ;

And god bids go. Mercury, as mentioned in the Argument, urges his
ure. *Punic* is another name for Carthaginian.

Not Simois stream attracts, but Tiber's shore. Not the land of
but that of Italy, attracts you.

And. Which will perhaps be found.

Pygmalion's wealth. Dido had brought with her much of the
not only of her late husband, Sichæus, but also of her hostile
n, Pygmalion.

Happier that Ilium change to Punic town,

And thou to Tyrian king.

n or Troy represents the fortunes of Æneas, Tyrian those of Dido,
me from Tyre.

And gods companions. His household gods.

41.

So may Ascanius a bright course fulfil,
 Anchises peaceful sleep,)—
 Pity my wretched house; slave of your will,
 My fault 's to love and weep.

42.

No Phthian I nor no Mycenian : foe
 My sire nor husband were.
 To wed you shame? With you but Dido go,
 No matter how nor where.

43.

Known are to me the waves on Afric's shore,
 By seasons safe their tide.
 When light winds serve you 'll ply both sail and
 Now forced in port to ride. [oar,

44.

Take me the weather to observe, 'twere best,
 Nor fear protracted stay.
 Your half-refitted fleet and men distressed
 Demand a brief delay.

45.

For my desert do this, or wave excuse,
 By my lost hope I ask :
 'Till the floods calm . . . and love . . . 'till time
 Teach sufferance: bitter task! [and use

46.

If not, it is our mind with life to end :
 You 'll not be long severe.
 Note but our portrait while these lines are penned:
 Your Trojan blade lies here.

41. *Ascanius*. His son, who afterwards received the name of Iulus. *Anchises*, his father.

No Phthian; that is, no ally of Achilles. *No Mycenian*; that is, no ally of Agamemnon.

42. *To wed you shame?* Are you ashamed to marry?

47.

And tears fall down our cheek upon the blade
That will in blood be stained.
How apt the gift is to my purpose made !
A grave is cheaply gained.

48.

Nor this to my poor breast a primal wound ;
It knew love's cruel dart.
Dear sister, you, in vain my fault who found,
The last devoirs impart.

49.

Of good Sichæus on my tomb no word.
These o'er my ashes stand :
Æneas gave the motive and the sword ;
She fell by her own hand.

LETTER VIII.

HERMIONE TO ORESTES.

ARGUMENT.

Agamemnon, soon after his return from the Trojan war, was murdered by his queen Clytemnestra, and her lover Ægisthus, a cousin, in whose hands the chief had left the care of his government. Orestes, the prince royal, then a youth, would have shared the same fate, but he was warned by his sister Laodicea, and fled the country. As soon as he attained the first years of manhood he spread a report of his death; returned privately, accompanied by his bosom friend Pylades; and avenged his father, by killing both the queen and her paramour. This violent sacrifice of feeling to what he deemed his duty drove him mad. He was, however, restored to reason by Apollo himself, and absolved by the Areopagus. He had been early betrothed to his cousin Hermione, daughter of his uncle Menelaus by the beautiful Helen, under the auspices of his maternal grandfather Tyndarus, to whose tutelage she had been confided by Menelaus during his absence in the Trojan war. Menelaus, ignorant of the engagement made by the grandfather, promised her also to Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, and he, on his return from the war, took violent possession of her in spite of her previous engagement. Remaining, however, faithful to her first love, and even detesting Pyrrhus, she sends this letter privately to say to Orestes, that by a vigorous proceeding on his part she might be wrested from the hands of Pyrrhus, and repossessed by the preferred of her heart. This, in fact, soon afterwards took place, for Orestes killed Pyrrhus in the Temple of Apollo, and regained his Hermione, with whom, after an early life so tragically eventful, he lived in peace to a good old age.

1.

HERMIONE to Orestes, once allied
Both as her lord and brother;
Now brother only, for she's doomed a bride
By violence to another.

2.

Pyrrhus, unbending as his iron sire,
Keeps me within his door,
To lawless will opposing honest ire:
Can feeble woman more?

1. The first stanza renders the two first lines of the Latin.

2. *His iron sire.* The inflexible Achilles.

3.

Pyrrhus, hold off," I say, "not friendless I,
 "A wife's respect who claim."
 As if as the wind, he makes me onward hie,
 Calling Orestes' name.

4.

Were Sparta taken could one suffer more,
 Under barbarian thrall?
 Andromache from Greece less sufferance bore
 At her proud city's fall.

5.

your Hermione, Orestes, dear?
 Lay hands upon your right.
 For stolen cattle you would raise a spear,
 For consort sure you'd fight.

6.

Think of my father, whose lost love to get
 Was general cause of strife.
 Wronged and content had he sat down, even yet
 Helen were Paris' wife.

7.

Team no battalions nor aggressive fleet:
 Come boldly in alone.
 Not that by war, if needed, 'twere unmeet
 For Love to claim his own.

8.

Have we not Atreus for our common sire?
 I'm cousin, if not spouse,
 Let wife her lord, let cousin cousin fire,
 Two calls your heat to rouse.

A spouse's right who claim. Being betrothed to Orestes.
Calling. Me calling on the name of Orestes.

Andromache. The wife of Hector.

Think of my father. Menelaus, the rape of whose wife, Helen, by
 a, caused the Trojan war.

Have we not Atreus for our common sire. Her father, Menelaus,
 his father, Agamemnon, were sons of Atreus.

9.

Our union made by Tyndarus, grave with age,
 O'er me full power who bore,
 My father could not rightly disengage
 What his had bound before.

10.

We plighted, injuring no one by our love :
 Wed him, I break my vows.
 Good Menelas to pardon we shall move,
 For Cupid's dart he knows.

11.

Love like his own is little to demand ;
 Set Helen in his view.
 As she to him I to Orestes stand,
 Pyrrhus is Paris too.

12.

And though he endless boast his father's acts,
 Your sire's are on the roll.
 He ruled Achilles : one a part enacts,
 The other guides the whole.

13.

Your lineage too : Atreus from Pelops got :
 Of five from Jove you are one.
 Nor valourless : unhappy arms, but what ?
 A father set them on.

9. *Tyndarus*. Her maternal grandfather.

His. His sire ; by courtesy, however, since it indicates Tyndarus, her father's father-in-law.

10. *We plighted*. Our faith to each other.

For Cupid's dart he knows. Having been smitten with love for Helen.

11. *As she to him I to Orestes stand*. She was his lawful wife ; I am betrothed to you.

Pyrrhus is Paris. Paris robbed Menelaus of his lawful wife ; Pyrrhus keeps your betrothed by force.

12. *His father's acts*. The deeds of Achilles.

Your sire's. The deeds of Agamemnon.

He ruled Achilles. Being his commander-in-chief.

13. *Of five from Jove you are one*. Orestes, son of Agamemnon, who was son of Atreus the son of Pelops, who was son of Tantalus, begotten of Jove.—*Unhappy arms*. The necessity of revenging on his own

14.

ould in more glorious cause you had been led,
 But forced who could do more ?
 ur work complete, for where Atrides bled
 Gushed forth Ægisthus' gore.

15.

acides your praise to crime would wrest,
 And that before my face.
 e still, poor heart, within this suffering breast,
 O'er swoll'n with foul disgrace.

16.

restes 'fore Hermione to blame !
 And she nor strength nor sword !
 eep well she may, in tears immerse her shame :
 How on my breast they poured !

17.

ars only left and amply they are shed,
 An unremitting flood.
 ir race's curse even yet unlimited :
 Tantalian loves run rude.

18.

eed one repeat, the plumage of the swan
 Made amorous Jove's attire ?
 ie Elis chariot race, where Pelops won
 And wore Hippodamia ?

ther the murder of his father. — *A father set them on.* That is, your
 her's murder caused you to take arms.

4. *Your work complete.* Full and complete vengeance being taken.
 Ægisthus. Mentioned at the beginning of the Argument.

5. *Æacides.* Pyrrhus, descendant of Æachus, in the order Æachus,
 eus, Achilles, Pyrrhus.

6. *Crime would wrest.* Would construe into a crime.

7. *Tantalian loves run rude.* The following lines show that the
 men of Tantalus' line fell a prey to violence in love.

8. *The plumage of the swan.* According to the fable, Jupiter, to
 ain the favours of Leda, assumed the form of a swan. — *The Elis*
riot race. Ænomaus, king of Pisa and Elis, betted on a chariot

19.

How Pollux and how Castor once again
 Helen to Sparte restored ?
 How, Helen stolen by the Idean swain,
 Our Greece for vengeance roared ?

20.

The memory 's faint, but there our woe begins !
 All seemed afraid to move :
 Tyndarus and Phœbe wept, so did the twins :
 Leda invoked her Jove.

21.

I, wearing then long infant curls, out scream,
 " Mamma gone without me ! "
 In fine, lest not of Pelops' race we seem,
 Pyrrhus my lord must be.

22.

Oh, had Pelides 'scaped the fatal bow,
 His son in awe to keep !
 Alive he would not, no, nor would he now,
 Let wedded husband weep.

race his daughter Hippodamia against the life of his opponent, Pelops. Now as the king drove by proxy, and Pelops was his own whip, the latter had an opportunity of practising a means not yet quite obsolete: he bribed the king's coachy, and won. It will be observed that this is another Hippodamia than the lady who was cause of the battle of the Centaurs, noted Letter II., verse 18; the latter was daughter of Adrastus, king of Argolis.

19. *How Pollux and how Castor.* Helen, whose beauty had renown even in her childhood, was at ten years old carried off and kept concealed by Theseus, but safely restored by him to her brothers, Castor and Pollux.

The Idean swain. Paris, who, as we have seen, was bred a shepherd on Mount Ida.

20. *There our woe begins.* There began woe to Grecian families, the Trojan war then breaking out.

Phœbe. Her aunt, a sister of Helen.

Leda. Mother of Helen and the twins, Castor and Pollux.

21. *Lest not of Pelops' race we seem.* She has already shown that the women descending from Tantalus, the father of Pelops, were doomed to violence, and affirms that she is no exception, since Pyrrhus, in whose power she remains, is capable of it to a great degree.

22. *Oh had Pelides 'scaped the fatal bow.* Would that his father, Achilles, had escaped the fatal arrow of Paris, which killed him.—*Let*

23.

What wrong of mine hath made the gods unfair?
 What star malign hath crossed?
 Ledaëa gone, my sire the corslet bare,
 To me both parents lost.

24.

In infancy no kiss, no soft caress,
 Mother, you gave to me.
 Ne'er to your bosom wont my cheek to press,
 While fondled on your knee.

25.

My school cost you no thought: engaged to wed,
 My couch gave you no care.
 We met at length, and, if the truth be said,
 I knew not which you were.

26.

Yet singled Helen out, so beauties shine:
 "Which is my girl?" you ask.—
 One shade of comfort still: Orestes mine:
 But as he fill his task.

27.

Pyrrhus for rape, contra my sire contends:
 First cause of both was Troy.
 While Titan's radiant car its circle wends,
 Some respite I enjoy.

wedded husband weep. Since he took arms among the Greeks to redress the wrong done to my father, Menelaus, were he alive, he would oppose the same wrong being done to you.

23. *Ledaëa gone, my sire the corslet bare.* My mother Helen eloped; my father at the war.

26. *But as he fill his task.* His duty, which is to assert his right, and get me out of the hands of Pyrrhus.

27. *Pyrrhus for rape, contra my sire contends.* Pyrrhus strives to exercise violence on me: my father took arms against Paris' abduction of Helen.

While Titan's radiant car its circle wends. That is, during the day, Titan being a name given to the sun.

28.

But plenteous tears and sobs come with the night,
 On tristful couch reclined,
 When weary hours in vain to sleep invite,
 And no retreat to find.

29.

Oft stupid in forgetfulness I sink,
 And reach his cumbent side :
 Recoiling from the contact farther shrink,
 Nor the loathed touch abide.

30.

For Pyrrhus' oft Orestes' name I' ve said :
 Such faults my grief allay.
 Now by our race I swear, and by its head,
 Whom land and sea obey,

31.

By thy great father's dust, which owes to thee
 Revenge for murdered life,
 Extinct in youth will I, Tantalian, be,
 Or be Tantalian's wife.

30. *Now by our race.* One of the most abundant in matter for tragedy.
By its head. The head of that family was Jupiter himself, the father
 of Tantalus.

31. *Extinct in youth will I, Tantalian, be,*
Or be Tantalian's wife.

I who am descended from Tantalus will die young, or be the wife of
 you who are also descended from Tantalus.



LETTER IX.

DEJANIRA TO HERCULES.

ARGUMENT.

Hercules was the son of Jupiter by Alcmena, daughter of Electryon king of Argos. Alcmena had been given in marriage to Ampytrion, a prince of Thebes, under condition that he should not enter into enjoyment of his bride till he had gained a decisive victory over the king's enemies. Jupiter then, smitten with the beauty of the wife, during the husband's absence on an expedition, assumed his form, presented himself as just returned from victory, and was received as a loving husband ought to be. Juno was moved to jealousy by this intrigue, and bore malice to Hercules throughout his earthly career. She excited Eurystheus king of Mycenæ to propose to his daring spirit many arduous and perilous labours, under the hope that he would perish in performing them, but, on the contrary, he returned victorious from all. Strong, however, against men and monsters, he gave way to love, and abandoned himself to all its excesses. Before his great undertaking of the tasks proposed by Eurystheus he had married Dejanira, daughter of Æneus king of Calydon, and his wife addresses this letter to him to shame him from the excesses to which he is abandoning himself, exposing particularly his amour with Omphale queen of Lydia, and the last of his loves, that of Iôle princess of Æchalia. She sets before his view the glorious actions of his life, that by their scale he may estimate his present conduct and reform it. While writing, however, she receives news of Hercules' calamity; his death being caused by a poisoned tunic guilefully given to her by the centaur Nessus, who, in the act of carrying her violently away, was reached and mortally wounded by Hercules' arrow. The dying centaur gave Dejanira the poisoned tunic, affirming that if her husband wore it he would remain ever true to her. In consequence of Hercules' late irregularities she sent it in the hope of reclaiming him, and the consequence was his death. Overwhelmed then with extreme grief, she ponders on the manner of expiating her fault, and resolves, in fine, to hang herself.

1.

ÆCHALIA to your titles joined we greet,
The vanquished victor grieve.
Our states with ugly whispers are replete,
Marring all you achieve.

1. *Æchalia*. It is uncertain which country of the name is here indicated. Its king, Eurytus, however, offered his daughter Iôle to whoever should beat him in archery. Hercules won the fair prize, and the king refused to fulfil his engagement. The hero then made war on him, conquered Æchalia, killed King Eurytus, and obtained possession of his daughter Iôle, of whom he became violently enamoured.

The vanquished victor. Vanquished by the charms of Iôle; hence the condolence mixed with Dejanira's felicitations.

Ugly whispers. Concerning the effeminacy of his present life.

2.

Whom Juno nor unheard of labours bent,
 Him Iöle enchains.
 Eurystheus and the goddess are content :
 Your losses make her gains.

3.

But he will blame to whom did not suffice
 One day to form your mould.
 Fear Venus ; for of Juno's hate your rise :
 Love downward tends to hold.

4.

Look back, and see coerced to peace all lands
 In Neleus' girdle pressed.
 This bruted forth to every coast expands
 Your name from east to west.

5.

You have sustained those heavens whereto you
 Assuming Atlas' place : [tend,
 Unhappily notorious in the end,
 If fame turn to disgrace.

6.

Infant, two horrid snakes you're said to crush :
 In the cradle worthy Jove !
 Beware the man, degenerate, fall to blush,
 Seeing the child above.

2. *The goddess.* Juno.

3. *But he.* Jupiter.

4. *In Neleus' girdle.* Within the limits of the sea.

5. *Assuming Atlas' place.* Atlas either took his name from the mountain in Africa or the mountain from him. He was of the race of the Titan giants, king of Mauritania, and said to bear the heavens on his shoulders. This may be attributed to the height of the mountain, but it is more generally thought to have arisen from his love of astronomy. Hercules is said to have borne his load for one day, probably from having taken part in his studies.

6. *Beware the man degenerate.* Beware lest you, a man, blush to consider that you were more illustrious when a child.

7.

in neither monsters, nor Eurystheus' hate,
Nor Juno, Love brings down.
nobly matched is Hercules' co-mate !
Whom Jupiter must own !

8.

qual steers but ill endure the yoke :
So couples widely matched.
parity will discontent provoke,
While equals live attached.

9.

usband far away, in arduous quest
Of labours frightful all :
widowed prayers the gods solicit, lest
By some dread foe he fall.

10.

v serpents, boars, and lions my only theme,
And dogs of triple throat.
udy entrails and the nightly dream,
Omens of mystic note.

11.

whispers of uncertain fame I've seized,
Tossed between hope and fear.
ur exiled mother grieves the god to have
Father nor Hyllus here. [pleased,

*Whom neither monsters, nor Eurystheus' hate, nor Juno, Love
s down.* You, whose glorious career no danger nor difficulty raised
e hatred of Eurystheus and Juno could arrest, give way to love.
nobly matched. Ironically; in the face of all these wrongs
a fine thing to be Hercules' wife and owned by Jupiter as a
ter!

My widowed prayers. Widow by her husband's absence.

Tossed as I am.

god. Jupiter.

her nor Hyllus. Neither your father, Amphytrion, nor our son,
is.

12.

We feel Eurystheus heavy on us weigh,
 Dispensing Juno's ire :
 Nor that enough ; your love runs far astray,
 Full feasting hot desire.

13.

Not to name Auge's rape in Parthenus' vales,
 Astydamia's too ;
 Of Thespius' fifty daughters similar tales :
 All this is slight to you.

14.

But one, a later crime usurps our bans :
 From her a step-son born.
 Meander serpentine through the lands,
 In all directions borne,

15.

Saw ribboned amulets that throat infold,
 That heaven-sustaining neck !
 Nor Her'cles blushed to adorn his thews wit
 His brawn with gems to deck ! [gold

13. *Not to name Auge's rape in Parthenus' vales.* Auge was daughter of Alcus king of Arcadia, in which country Mount Parthenus is situated. *Astydamia.* Violated because her father, Ormenus king of Thessal, refused her in marriage to Hercules, as knowing him to be married already to Dejanira.

Of Thespius' fifty daughters. Thespius was an Athenian king. The number of fifty children occurs frequently in these remote histories probably that number was used to express a large number indefinitely as our *hundred, score.*

14. *A later crime usurps our bans.* Encroaches on our marriage right. She alludes to Omphale, a queen of Lydia, in Asia Minor, who bought Hercules when the oracle had pronounced that he must be three years a slave for having in a fit of insanity attempted to carry away the sacred tripod from the temple at Delphi. An attachment, however, soon grew between the queen and her slave. She gave him his liberty and made him her received lover, and the authority she exercised over him and the effeminate works to which he submitted under her, form the subject of the sixteen following verses.

From her a step-son born. Omphale's son by Hercules was named Lamus.

Meander, or Meandros, is a celebrated river in Lydia, remarkable for its numerous windings, whence the tortuosities of streams are called meanders.

15. *That heaven-sustaining neck.* When, as above mentioned, he took Atlas' place in supporting the heavens.

16.

An arm which strangled dead the Nemean pest !
 Whose spoil those shoulders wear :
 See but that shaggy head in mitra dressed !
 Comelier its aspen there.

17.

Is 't no disgrace about your loins the zone
 A Lydian strumpet wears ?
 You by whom bloody Diomed was thrown
 To his carnivorous mares !

18.

Busiris, had he seen your glories' wreck,
 Were of his fall ashamed :
 Antæus would denude your bawbled neck,
 Lest with it he be named.

19.

Among the maidens, supple to command,
 The work-basket you hold :
 Nor shames Alcides' all-victorious hand
 At maidens' work we're told.

16. *The Nemean pest.* This was a tremendous lion, said to be born of the hundred-headed Typhon, which afflicted the country of Nemea. Hercules at the age of sixteen, as they relate, encountered it unarmed, and choked it by straining its jaws open with his bare hands.

In mitra dressed. This is a woman's ornament for the head, used in Phrygia and Lydia.

Comelier its aspen there. Alluding to Hercules' expedition to the infernal regions, on which occasion he wore a crown of aspen leaves. The tree afterwards became sacred to him.

17. *Bloody Diomed.* A king of Thrace, who fed his horses on human flesh. Hercules killed him, and threw his body as provender to his own stud.

18. *Busiris.* An Egyptian tyrant, who sacrificed foreigners on the altar of Jupiter. Hercules was in his power, bound hand and foot for that purpose, but the hero snapped his bonds and killed the tyrant, with many of his courtiers, then offered his body on the altar prepared for himself.

Antæus. A giant, son of Terra, the earth, who killed so many opponents in wrestling that he vaunted to build a temple with their skulls; but this unvaried success was owing to his nerves being constantly reinvigorated by his mother Terra. Our hero tried a bout with him, and to set the giant beyond manna's reach he lifted him from the ground and throttled him in the air.

19. *Alcides.* A patronymic appellation of Hercules, from Alcæus, the father of Amphytrion, his mother's husband.

20.

'Twill even spin, drawing uneven thread,
 The fair one's task to pay.
 How oft in doing hath its awkward speed
 Broken the ball away?

21.

Poor bungler, you'll be thought to endure the
 And stoop the head, and crouch: [thong,
 Yet vaunt you of high deed, right worthy song;
 'T were better not avouch.

22.

To wit: that, yet a cradled infant, you
 Two serpents choked and tore:
 On Erymanthus, cypress crown'd, you slew
 The vast Tegæan boar:

23.

Of heads on Thracian hall you say your word:
 Mares anthropophagous:
 Of triple Geryon, rich in flock and herd,
 Monster tricephalous:

24.

And Cerberus, the triple dog in one,
 Whose hair immix'd with snakes:
 The serpent, too, by every loss who won:
 A lopp'd head double makes.

22. *Erymanthus*. A mountain in Arcadia.

Tegæan. Arcadian; from the town of Tegæa.

23. *Of heads on Thracian hall*. The palace of the cruel Diomed, mentioned verse 17, who caused to be hung against his wall, as trophies, the heads of the human bodies on which he fed his horses.

Geryon, monster tricephalous. Geryon king of Gades, a prince exceeding rich in herds, had, according to fable, three heads and three bodies. This image is supposed to have arisen from a triplicity of circumstances; he ruled three kingdoms, had three sons, and three armies under their command. Hercules having killed him had all his cattle conveyed to Italy.

24. *Cerberus*. The three-headed dog which guards the gate of hell. Hercules mastered him, and brought him up to earth, after having

25.

The giant choking in the air, whose head
 With blood to bursting fills :
 The centaurs felled, whose timid remnant fled
 To their Thessalian hills :—

26.

These you can tell, in Tyrian purple dressed.
 For shame ! the subject waive :
 And she, with club and lion-spoil invest,
 Holds trophies of her slave.

27.

Proceed : take heart : more prowess to recall :
 Not you the man, but she.
 Of all the fallen your own the greatest fall,
 Stationed more loftily.

28.

Be hers the guerdon of your arduous fame :
 She is your exploits' heir :
 The Nemean lion's shaggy hide, oh shame !
 A puppet minx to wear !

29.

Nay, more than lion-spoils repay her charms,
 Yours, Herc'les, are her gain :

succeeded in his enterprise to the infernal regions in search of the apples of the Hesperides.

The serpent, too, by every loss who won. The hydra of Lyrna, said to have had many heads, each of which being cut off was replaced by two.

25. *The giant choking in the air.* Antæus, mentioned note 18.

The centaurs felled. The centaurs, and a company of the people called Lapithæ, to whom Theseus and Hercules belong, were invited to the marriage feast of Pirithous and Hippodamia. The centaurs, in their cups, were rude to the women, which was resented by the party of the Lapithæ; hence a general battle in which the centaurs were worsted, and Hercules afterwards nearly extirpated them.

26. *Club and lion spoils.* These are the usual insignia of Hercules. His favourite weapon was a massy club, and his cloak the skin of the Nemean lion, mentioned verse 16.

29. *Yours, Hercules, are her gain.* Since you are become her prisoner, bound in love.

Black with the Lernean bane. Dipped in the poison of the Lernean hydra.

A feeble strumpet bears terrific arms,
Black with the Lernean bane !

30.

Poising the club by which huge monsters fell,
To th' glass the plaything goes.
Yet hearsay this : less dolorous ills they tell :
What 's seen perforce one knows.

31.

A newer gawd is set before my sight ;
My suffering clear as day.
Ignore I cannot, for in open light
She stands full in my way.

32.

Not like a captive with dishevelled hair,
Veiling a visage sad ;
But bold, erect, with vest of richest wear,
As you in Phrygia had.

33.

She looks sublime, on conquered Herc'les' arm :
Æchalia won you 'd swear.
Retreat but Dejanira with alarm,
The trull to spouse you rear.

34.

Alcid' and Iöle in one love chain
United ne'er to part !
The warning thrills with horror through my
Hold, hold offended heart ! [brain :

30. *Less dolorous ills they tell.* Ills which are related to us are less felt than those which we see, and therefore must believe.

31. *A newer gawd.* This is Iöle, mentioned in note 1, on *Æchalia*.

32. *Not like a captive.* We have seen in the same note 1, that Hercules besieged her city, Æchalia, slew her father, and carried her off as a prisoner.

As you in Phrygia had. When he was at the court of Omphale, who has formed the subject of the preceding verses. Phrygia was then remarkable for magnificence.

33. *Æchalia won.* You would think that Iöle's city, Æchalia, had resisted the siege, instead of being taken and ruined.

Retreat but Dejanira. If I, Dejanira, do but quit the place.

35.

Me in the crowd you loved, but without shame :
Twice causing deadly fight.
First Acheloüs in the marshy slime
Hid his horn-broken plight.

36.

Then centaur Nessus at the Evenus fell :
The river bore the stain.—
Ha ! what's that rumour ?—Horrid news they
By Nessus' fraud he 's slain ! [tell,—

37.

What have I done ? in madness whither borne ?
Die, Dejanira, die !
By thee thy lord on Cēta's side is torn :
Thou did'st his destiny.

38.

Is Dejanira fitly Herc'les' spouse ?
Her end shall testify.
See her, Cēnides, worthy of our house !
Die, Dejanira, die !

35.

*First Acheloüs in the marshy slime
Hid his horn-broken plight.*

Acheloüs, the son of Oceanus and of Terra or of Tethys, was god of the river so called, in Epirus. He had obtained from his mother the power, when engaged in fight, of assuming any living form he pleased. Being one of the numerous competitors for the hand of Dejanira, whose father would give her to the strongest, he had to contest the prize with Hercules, and used the mutative power with which he was endowed : first he assumed the form of a serpent, then of a bull, under which phasis Hercules seized him by the horn and broke it short, whence the beaten river god withdrew with shame to his marshes.

Then centaur Nessus.....By Nessus' fraud he 's slain. The centaur was entrusted by Hercules to convey his wife over the river Evenus, and having got across was proceeding to extort favours by violence, but Hercules, who saw him from the opposite bank, let fly an arrow and wounded him mortally, for the dart, having been dipped in the blood of the hydra, was poisonous. The dying centaur then persuaded Dejanira to take his tunic, which, having been pierced, he knew to be infected with the poison, and to keep it as a talisman, having at all times the power, if Hercules wore it, of fixing his love to her. Dejanira, too credulous, kept the tunic, and by the irregularities of her husband was led to wish to make trial of its efficacy, and hence the catastrophe. Hercules, in torment with the effect of the poison, lighted his own funeral pile, and burnt himself to death.

37. *Cēta.* A mountain in Thessaly.

38. *Cēnides, see her.* An invocation to her brother Meleager, the son of Ceneus, who is dead ; suggested by a certain similitude of their fate.

39.

Oh, fatal house ! Agrios usurps its throne ;
 Poor Ceneus bends with age ;
 Tydeus, one brother, far in lands unknown ;
 A brand the other's gage,

40.

Which burnt, he fell : herself our mother slew.
 Die, Dejanira, die !
 One thing be prayed : by sacred love—and true,
 Think none that it was I.

41.

“ This blood,” quoth Nessus, writhing in his pain,
 “ Faint love will vivify.”
 He gave — I sent the shirt imbued with bane.
 Die, Dejanira, die !

42.

Now farewell, father, sister, all I prize,
 Brother, and country, too :
 And thou, oh day, the last to light these eyes,
 Hyllus and Lord, adieu !

His love for Atalanta caused his death, her love for Hercules will cause her own. On Meleager, see Letter III. verse 23. This name, Ceneides, in Letter III. has by mistake been written with Æ instead of C.

39. *Oh fatal house.* Ceneus, the father of Dejanira, was deposed from his throne by his brother Agrios, now reigning: *Tydeus*, one brother, on account of the accidental murder of a friend had fled to Argos, and remained there, and we have seen, Letter iii., verse 23, that a *burning brand was the gage* of the life of the other, Meleager.

40. *Herself our mother slew.* See the same note on Ceneides, Meleager. *Die, Dejanira die !* Our confined limit has forced this meager translation of the beautiful line, *Impia quin dubitas Deianira mori*, which is the more to be regretted, since the poet repeats it four times ; and again, that it has forced an equal recurrence of the same rhymes, which, when free, we invariably take care to avoid ; but to render the spirit of the author, it seemed indispensable to follow him as well as might be.

Think none. Let no man think.

42. *Hyllus.* Her son by Hercules.

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## LETTER X.

### ARIADNE TO THESEUS.

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#### ARGUMENT.

Minos, son of Jupiter and Europa, and king of Crete, in consequence of his son Androgeos having been assassinated at Athens by order of the Athenian king Ægeus, who was jealous of his fame and popularity as a wrestler, made war against that people, and, after a long and severe struggle, reduced them to accept severe terms of peace, namely, that they should send every year to Crete seven youths and seven virgins to be devoured by a monster, half man half bull, called Minotaur, which had been produced by the unnatural connection, during Minos' absence in this war, of his wife Pasiphae with a favourite white bull. The creature was kept in an inextricable labyrinth. When the lot fell on Theseus to make one of these youths, and his turn came to be exposed to the monster, he had gained the favour of Ariadne, one of Minos' daughters, who furnished him with a clew, by the help of which he might find his way out of the labyrinth if he should overcome the Minotaur, which he was fortunate enough to do. Theseus, this exploit achieved, made his escape, Ariadne and Phædra, Minos' two daughters, consenting to be companions of his flight. Under consideration that he is to espouse Ariadne in gratitude for her having saved his life, they took ship, and made a port in the island of Naxos, where, by the advice of the god Bacchus, instead of marrying he abandoned Ariadne and sailed, leaving her in a profound sleep. On waking she seeks her lover in vain, perceives his departure and her abandoned position, and addresses this letter to him, bewailing his cruel treatment of her, his forgetfulness of past service, and imploring him to return. We have seen in Letter IV., that Theseus, on reaching home, espoused the sister, Phædra.

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#### 1.

MILDER to me than Theseus wolves and boars ;  
Trustworthier than he.

Theseus, these lines are written on these shores  
Where you abandoned me.

#### 2.

In somnolent oblivion left by you,  
O traitor to my sleep !

'Twas at the first congeal of morning dew,  
When birds lost autumn weep.

## 3.

Drowsy awaking, forth my arms I strain,  
O'er Theseus' neck to throw :  
He's gone : they back recoil ;—extend again :  
Is it a dream ? ah, no.

## 4.

Fear banished sleep : all trembling quick I rise,  
And leave the widowed bed,  
Holding my beating heart ; tears fill my eyes ;  
Bewildered my poor head.

## 5.

The moon shone bright ; I hasten to the coast :  
All vacant sea and strand !  
Hurry now here, now there, my senses lost,  
O'er shingle, reef, and sand,

## 6.

Calling the way along : “ *Hola, Theseu !*”  
The hollow rocks reply :  
Their echoes verberate the sound anew,  
Aiding my frantic cry.—

## 7.

There is a peak with stunted foliage rare,  
A pendant rock one side :  
Mounting, desire gave wings, to compass there  
A range of view more wide.

## 8.

I see, for even the cruel winds betray,  
The fresh south fill your sail :  
Or fancying see, and, shuddering with dismay,  
My wounded spirits fail.

## 9.

Grief will not linger long ; new roused I burn ;  
Re-halloo to the wind,  
“ Theseus, oh, whither fliest ? Theseus, return,  
“ You're leaving *one* behind.”

10.

This said, words failing, raise lugubrious moan,  
Beating my tortured breast.  
And that, unheard, the eye at least may own,  
Lift up my arms distressed.

11.

And signals on high points conspicuous rear  
To supplicate relief.  
You're out of sight: then flowed the ample tear:  
Hope died: all fell to grief.

12.

Weep, endless weep, my weary eyes, since there  
Your sails were lost to view.  
Now wild I wander with dishevelled hair  
As Theban bacchantes do.

13.

Or gelid sitting on a rock, to pore  
Seaward, myself a stone.  
Or dwelling o'er the bed where two before,  
But widowed now of one.

14.

At night I seek the part where late you lay,  
The spot you warmly pressed,  
And sobbing lie, and to our pillow say,—  
“Once two, oh! yield the rest!”

15.

“Two we came here, my bed, single to leave;  
“The greater part, oh where?”—  
Incult the isle, no vestige I perceive  
Of plough or oxen here.

---

12. *As Theban bacchantes.* The priestesses of Bacchus, who, at the festivals in honour of the god, went abroad half naked, with dishevelled hair, and making wild noises.

## 16.

By ocean hemmed, no mark of seaman-kind,  
 No ship to stem the sea :  
 And, grant both sailor, ship, and favouring wind,  
 My home is none to me.

## 17.

The waters glided o'er with breezes fleet,  
 We make our port exiled ;  
 No home for me in all thy towns, O Crete !  
 Cradle of Jove the child !

## 18.

My father and the land that owns his sway  
 Were injured by my deed,  
 When to avert your fate I lent the way,  
 A clew your steps to lead.

## 19.

You swore by danger past you would be mine  
 While both our beings last :  
 We live, O Theseus, I no longer thine,  
 By perjury off-cast.

## 20.

Me had but met the club my brother slew,  
 Then death had been the end :

16. *My home is none to me.* On account of her disobedience to her father in aiding Theseus to escape from the labyrinth.

17. *The waters glided o'er.* Supposing I find means to get over to my country.

*No home for me in all thy towns, O Crete !  
 Cradle of Jove the child !*

Crete, which boasted of a hundred cities, claimed the honour also of being the birthplace of Jupiter. Saturn, his father, who held the godship of the world on condition that he should raise no male child, devoured his boys at their birth, but the goddess mother, Ops, gave him a stone to digest at the birth of Jupiter, and entrusted the infant to the care of the Corybantes, priests of Cybele on Mount Ida, by whom the young god was brought up on the isle of Crete.

18. *My father and the land that owns his sway.* Minos and the isle of Crete.

20. *Me had but met the club my brother slew.* Would that the club with which you slew the Minotaur had fallen on me.

*Evils that may impend.* My misery in being abandoned by you is

Now grieves my soul, with all her wrongs from  
Evils that may impend. [you,

21.

A thousand threatening deaths my fancy draws,  
Less dreadful than delay:  
A famished wolf distending avid jaws,  
Her craving to allay:

22.

Haply the tawny lion stalks his round,  
Or tigers prowl abroad:  
'Tis said sea monsters on this coast abound:  
Fear even of the sword.

23.

Save me from captive chain however mild!  
From tedious labouring hours!—  
Whose sire was Minos, mother Phœbus' child,  
Theseus, yet more, am yours.

24.

Contemplating the sea, the land, the shore;  
Sore threat both land and sea.  
Remain the gods, their forms affright me more.  
Wild wolves my destiny!

25.

Of native men unsure the helping hand:  
Strangers, now tried, effray.  
Would that Androgeos lived, then Cecrops' land  
No debt of deaths would pay.

---

augmented by numerous dangers incident to such an exposed position. These she is about to develope.

23. *Whose mother Phœbus' child.* Her mother, Pasiphæ, was the daughter of Perseis, a sea nymph, one of the Oceanides, by Phœbus or the Sun.

25. *Strangers, now tried, effray.* Foreigners, since my experience of them in you, frighten me still more.

*Would that Androgeos lived, then Cecrops' land.* Cecrops' land is that of Greece, and had not Androgeos been murdered there, Minos would not have exacted the sacrifice of Greek children mentioned in the Argument.

26.

Nor, Theseus, had your knotted bludgeon fell'd  
     The semi-bovine man,  
 Nor you from me the thread eductive held,  
     The life-string of your plan.

27.

No marvel if the palm by you be borne,  
     The Cretan bi-form slain :  
 Your iron breast, impervious to horn,  
     Naked were smit in vain.

28.

There flint, there adamant, or there thy heart,  
     Theseus, more hard than they,  
 Ah perfid sleep, to hold me here inert !  
     Why not then close my day ?

29.

And ye officious cruel winds, who blew  
     Too favouring to my wail !  
 Hand, tongue, more fatal : that my brother slew,  
     This me with a false tale.

30.

Leagued enemies were oaths, and winds, and sleep :  
     One maid 'gainst three allies :  
 No mother here my parting breath to weep,  
     And close my lifeless eyes.

31.

My wretched shade to utter realms will fly,  
     No friend the corse perfume :

26. *Semi-bovine man.* The Minotaur, who was half man, half bull.  
*The thread eductive.* The clew of thread which I furnished to lead  
 you out of the labyrinth.

27. *The Cretan bi-form.* The minotaur.  
*Your iron breast, insensible to horn.* Punning between the moral  
 and literal senses of the words iron, insensible.

29. *Hand, tongue.* Those of Theseus.

31. *My wretched shade.* The shades of bodies wanting burial were  
 doomed to wander beyond the limits of Elysium.

My bones by water-birds denuded lie:  
Such is my service' tomb.

32.

You touch Cecropian port, then home, and, full  
Of honours in your town,  
Recount the deed of the half-man, half-bull;  
Your labyrinth renown:

33.

Nor Ariadne in your tale be hid,  
Her, too, those titles need.  
Ægides you? no: Theseus never did  
Æthra Pittheüs breed.

34.

Him on a flood did some flint rock create,  
Ye gods! why not impart,  
That from his deck he saw my wretched state?  
'T would move his rigid heart.

35.

Here seated, view me with the mental eye;  
A foam-lashed crag my rest;  
My hair down drooping o'er my face descry,  
And my tear-deluged vest:

36.

See my frame, quivering like wind ruffled wheat,  
My slipping pen indite.  
But waive desert; 'tis vain, and let us treat  
Sans favour for good right.

32. *You touch Cecropian port.* Athenian port, the name of Cecrops, one of the early settlers there, having passed to the country. Here she lays a picture of his happiness in contrast with that of her own misery.

33. Here eight lines, the 33d and 34th stanzas of English, answer to six lines of Latin.

*Ægides you? no: Theseus never did  
Æthra Pittheüs breed.*

You the son of Ægeus? it cannot be, nor is it possible that Æthra, the child of Pittheus, can have borne such a son as you. The character of Æthra is still raised by the patronymic Pittheüs, since her father Pittheus was one of the wisest and best men of his time.



## 37.

Say to our aid my lord's dear life not due  
 What death owes he to me?  
 These hands, sore as my beaten bosom, v  
 Imploring o'er the sea!

## 83.

View these lank locks, one half in dolour  
 By tears, by sighs, by groans,  
 Oh, Theseus, pray, pray come: if I am d  
 You'll gather up my bones!

37. *Say to our aid my lord's dear life not due.* By the clew  
 him to get through the labyrinth.

38. We have seen, Letter II. note 20, that Ariadne did not  
 that she was afterwards espoused by Bacchus, and rode in a  
 by tigers, as the unhappy Phillis has told us (Letter II. verse

"She, and I envy not, a better gained,

"Tame tigers draw her car."

Also in Letter VI. verse 29, Hypsipyle, counting Bacchus  
 number of her ancestors, tells us that after death she took  
 heavens as a constellation. It is that called the Northern C

"And Bacchus, in whose Ariadne's crown

"Bright flames constellate shine."



## LETTER XI.

### CANACE TO MACAREUS.

#### ARGUMENT.

Macareus and Canace, son and daughter of Eolus king of the winds, had the misfortune to fall in love with each other; the consequence was the pregnancy of the sister. She was privately delivered, and her maid undertook to convey the child out of the palace in a flower basket, and put it to nurse. In doing this she had to pass by Eolus and his court, and, when, in the midst of them, the child crying betrayed itself to the boisterous grandfather, who, furious at the sin of his children, ordered the fruit of their crime to be immediately thrown to the dogs. He then, by one of his officers, sends to Canace a sword, with orders to kill herself. Before executing this rigid irrevocable mandate she writes the following to Macareus, who has taken refuge in the temple of Apollo, narrating her horrid situation, and praying him to collect the remains of the exposed child, and to deposit them in the same urn with her own.

#### 1.

As this, obliterate by tears, my life  
A blot will shortly be.  
One hand a pen, the other holds a knife,  
My paper on my knee.

#### 2.

Such is the child of Eolus: she may  
But so appease her sire.  
Would he were here to see the debt we pay,  
Fulfilling his desire!

#### 3.

His winds in rude ferocity surpassed,  
No tear his eye shall wet.  
'Tis much, in dwelling with the howling blast,  
Its tone his spirits get.

---

1. *A knife.* The sword sent by her father for her to execute on herself.

3. *'Tis much in dwelling with the howling blast.* An excuse in irony.

## 4.

Restraining Notus, Zephyr, and the North,  
 And whistling Eurus too,  
 Anger, alas, in spite of him breaks forth :  
 The feebler praise his due.

## 5.

Proud who by lineage to the empyrean rise,  
 And Jove's own kindred stand !  
 The fatal blade no less before me lies,  
 Ill fitting woman's hand.

## 6.

Why, brother, why did our affection run  
 Beyond fraternal cess ?  
 Would thy dear Canace, ere we made one,  
 Reduced to nothingness !

## 7.

With thee she warmed, and, as we've heard to  
 Some god within her burned. [say,  
 The colour fled her cheek ; wasting away,  
 All food to loathing turned.

## 8.

Uneasy sleep, a whole night seemed a year ;  
 Groaning, no pain I prove ;  
 No reason why, and, loving though so dear,  
 Scarce knowing what is love.

## 9.

My nurse's aged mind first saw the ill :  
 " Eola loves," she said.

---

4. *Notus*, the south wind. *Zephyr*, the west, and the mildest of the winds. *Eurus*, the south-east wind.

5. *Proud who by lineage*. Annotators dispute to Canace the kindred of Eolus with Jupiter. She might, perhaps, find it hard to make out her title. The pretension demonstrates at least that pride of birth is of all ages. Jupiter and the magnates of our own day may all say with prince Hal,—“They will be akin to us, or they'll fetch it from Japhet.”

9. *Eola*. Canace, daughter of Eolus.

My blush and downcast eye, in spite of will,  
Tacit confession made.

## 10.

And now, the signs of pregnancy more plain,  
The furtive pains augment.  
What herbs, what medicines, did she not obtain,  
What sinful means invent,

## 11.

Quite from our loins the burden to remove !  
This you were not to know.  
The birth, too strong, resists : in vain she strove :  
He safe eludes the blow.

## 12.

Nine times had Dian run her phaseful course,  
And fast refilled her orb,  
'Cute throes, unfelt before, and growing worse  
My ignorant fears absorb.

## 13.

I scream. "Hush, hush !" quoth nurse ; "you 'll  
make it known :"  
My lips her both hands press.  
Excruciate twinge will still put forth a groan :  
Nurse, fear, and shame repress.

## 14.

Word, cry, and plaint my energies constrain,  
The very tear held in.  
Death threats ; Lucina's aid invoked in vain :  
And death self-caused is sin.

10. *Furtive pain.* Pain which I am obliged to conceal.

11. *The birth.* The infant in embryo.

12. *Nine times had Dian run her phaseful course.* Nine times had the moon gone through her monthly changes.

13. *My lips her both hands pressed.* Both her hands pressed against my lips.

14. *Lucina.* A name of Juno or of Diana, both of whom presided over child-bearing.

*Death self-caused.* If her own sin become the cause of her death.

## 15.

'Twas then down stooping, piteously sad,  
You pressed me warm to you,  
And, "Live, oh dearest sister, live," you said,  
"Nor in one death link two.

## 16.

"Take courage; we shall wed, then he by whom  
"You 're mother claims his wife."  
As dead, believe me, you revoked my doom:  
A birth foredid my strife.

## 17.

A birth! poor victim! was not Eolus there?  
Hide shame from father's sight!  
Nurse laid it in a frail, concealed with care  
'Mong fruit with flowers bedight.

## 18.

Pronouncing prayer, she feigns a sacrifice:  
All, Eolus' self, make way.  
Now near the threshold, the poor infant's cries  
The artifice betray.

## 19.

Tremendous, once revealed the forged tale,  
Thundered the tempest chief.  
As water trembles ruffled by the gale,  
Or aspen's quivering leaf,

## 20.

So you might see my pallid members shake;  
The couch infirmly stands.  
He comes, nor slow appalling threats to make,  
Withholding scarce his hands.

---

15. *Nor in one death link two.* Your own and your child's.

16. *A birth foredid my strife.* The birth of the child put an end to my struggle.

## 21.

Shame-struck, and pouring tears, nor uttering  
 My tongue lies mute in fear. [word,  
 At once he dooms my son for beast or bird  
 Its little limbs to tear.

## 22.

Poor babe, it cried as if the doom it felt,  
 And mercy tried to call.  
 What was my feeling at such misery dealt?  
 Seek yours, you'll find it all.

## 23.

Fruit of myself was there, its foe before,  
 To wild wolves to be thrown!  
*He* left the room: 'twas then our face we tore,  
 And made a piteous moan.

## 24.

My father's satellite arrived meantime  
 With words of hideous sound:  
 "This sword from Eolus; you who know the  
 "The meaning can expound." [crime

## 25.

We know, and do accept; ay, in our breast  
 Deposed his gift shall be:  
 The wedding present by the sire addressed!  
 The boon of cruelty!

## 26.

Hence, hence, O Hymen, take thy flame and fly  
 With speed, ere yet awhile  
 Black furies be about us hideously,  
 To grace our funeral pile.

---

23. *He.* Her father, Eolus.

25. *Ay, in our breast deposed his gift shall be.* My father's dagger shall be struck into my heart as he wishes.

27.

Marry, dear sisters all with happier fate :  
 Let my misfortune warn.  
 But, what from my sad fruit could emanate  
 To offend, though hardly born ?

28.

Guilty, if guilty may, let him be said,  
 He died, poor babe, for me.  
 My son ! my grief ! to beasts a banquet made  
 Too horrid destiny !

29.

My child ! the wretched pledge of ill-star'd lov  
 Thy birthday is thy doom.  
 And me forbid in sad array to move  
 Tow'rd thy precocious tomb !

30.

On thy cold breast no mother's kisses laid,  
 Alive to jackals heft :  
 Myself anon will follow thy sad shade,  
 Nor sorrow long bereft.

31.

But thou, my hoped in vain, oh, pray consume  
 What from the beasts may fall :  
 Lay the poor dust with mine : one comm  
 One urn, however small. [ton

32.

Live and remember us, and shed thy tear.  
 Dread not a lover's clay,  
 But do the bidding of thy sister dear :  
 My father's I obey.

28. *If guilty may.* If so young a creature can be guilty.

31. *But thou, my hoped in vain.* Thou, Macareus, whom I in v  
 hoped for as a wedded husband.

32. *Dread not a lover's clay.* Fear not to approach and touch the b  
 of me, your departed friend.



## LETTER XII.

### MEDEA TO JASON.

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#### ARGUMENT.

Jason, on his expedition in search of the golden fleece, when arrived at Colchos, the term of his outward journey, excited a tender feeling in the heart of Medea, daughter of Æetes and Idya, king and queen of the country. An agreement of marriage having been made between them, she instructed him by what means he might accomplish the object of his voyage. The prize obtained, he privately embarked, having settled with Medea that she should follow him on board. With this view she left the palace, accompanied by her brother, the boy Absyrtus. On the way, perceiving that they were pursued by her father, she killed the youth, separated his limbs, and scattered them on the way to attract and occupy the king's attention, and by that means divert him from the pursuit. Thus she got safely aboard, and they arrived all well in Thessaly. Here they found Jason's father, Æson, worn out with age, and Medea, by her art, restores him to the vigour of youth. Jason at length repudiates Medea, and takes to wife Creusa, daughter of Creon, king of Corinth. Medea, furious at this, writes to Jason accusing him of ingratitude and treachery, and threatening deep revenge if he does not take her back.

---

#### 1.

At Colchos some small pains we took for you,  
In need of our poor art.  
Would the dispensers of the mortal clew  
Had there wound up my part !

#### 2.

Well had Medea died, so would not she  
Bewail her ruined peace.  
Ah me ! why ever did that Pelian tree  
Go seek the Phryxian fleece ?

---

1. *The dispensers of the mortal clew*, the Fates : three sisters, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, daughters of Erebus and Nox (hell and night). Their business was to determine the destinies of men, which they did by spinning a thread. The first held the distaff; the second apportioned the thread to the life of the man about to enter the world; the last, Atropos, with her shears cut it to mark the close of the career.

2. *Her ruined peace*, since Jason has abandoned her.  
*Why ever did that Pelian tree*. Why ever did that ship Argo, constructed of the timber of Mount Pelion.  
*Go seek the Phryxian fleece*. The golden fleece, the object of Jason's expedition, had been deposited at Colchis by Phryxus, son of Athamas.



## 3.

Why did that Argo ever stem our seas  
 To bring a Grecian throng?  
 Why did the sunny locks of Jason please,  
 And his too flattering tongue?

## 4.

Or why, since foreign sail upon our shore  
 Had brought audacious men,  
 Did he not unmedicate explore  
 The fire-breath'd oxen then?

## 5.

Had but the grain he cast offensive been,  
 He by his fruit struck dead,  
 What perjuries had we not avoided clean!  
 What evils missed our head!

## 6.

One likes with favours the ingrate to brand:  
 I'll do 't, 'tis all I get.  
 Retrace: your vessel hull'd to Colchic strand  
 Is safe in harbour set:

## 7.

Medea then was what your bride is now:  
 My sire had equal store:  
 Hers Corinth held, mine Scythia, land of snow,  
 To the left Pontic shore.

king of Thebes and Nephele. His mother dying, and his life being in danger from the jealousy of the step-mother, Ino, Phryxus and his sister, Helle, fled the country to go to the court of their friend Ætæus at Colchis, in a ship called the ram, or, according to the fable, on the back of a golden ram of magic endowments, who bore them through the air; but, passing over the entrance of the Propontis, Helle fell into the water and was drowned, whence those straits are called the sea of Helle or Hellespont. On arriving at Colchis, he sacrificed his ram to Mars and deposited its golden fleece in the temple.

3. *Argo*, the name of Jason's ship.

4. *The fire-breath'd oxen*. (See Letter VI., note 3.)

5. *Had but the grain he cast*. (See note, Letter VI., verses 3 and 4.)

6. *Is safe in harbour set*. She takes up her story from the point where Jason first entered their territory at Colchis.

7. *My sire had equal store*, territories as rich as those of her father.

8.

Opened Æetes' halls, the Grecian youth  
On broidered couch reclined.  
Then first I knew thee. There began the ruth  
And ruin of my mind.

9.

We saw and fell, with unknown fire consumed,  
Burning like fane-lit pine.  
You beautiful, me destiny-fordoomed.  
Your eye extinguished mine.

10.

You felt it, traitor, love lies not concealed ;  
The flame will needs appear.  
Just then the terms are read : strange bulls must  
Their shoulder to the gear ; [yield

11.

The bulls of Mars, more dread than for their horn,  
Whose fearful breath was fire ;  
Brass hoofs, their nostrils lined with brass in-  
Which flame and smoke expire. [born,

12.

Seed too you're bid with ample hand to throw,  
Armed people to beget,  
To smite you with each other as they grow :  
The sower sore beset !

13.

The last a sleepless dragon to deceive,  
Of charge not easy reft.  
Such the proposals, hearing which all grieve ;  
The festal board is left.

8. *Opened Æete's halls.* The saloons of Æete's palace were thrown open to the Grecian guests.

9. *Your eye extinguished mine.* I stood fascinated under your look.

10. *The terms are read,* the conditions on which the golden fleece is to be ceded to you.

10 to 13. Explained by the same passage already referred to. (Letter VI., note 3.)

14.

Creusa then and Creon's wide estate  
 Lay far beyond your view.  
 First you retire (my own tears scintillate),  
 Gasping a faint adieu.

15.

Deep smitten, to the couch I bear my pain,  
 Weeping, all night awake :  
 Before my view the bulls, the virile grain ;  
 Before my view the snake.

16.

Here love, there fear. Fear strengthens love.  
 'Twas day :  
 My tender sister came.  
 Forlorn, dishevelled, on the face I lay,  
 A seeming lifeless frame.

17.

She called on you : one asks, —another has :  
 We give the aid we pray.——  
 That wood so dense of oak and pine, that was  
 Impervious to day,

18.

Where Dian's temple rose, of antique fame ;  
 The goddess stands in gold ;—  
 You'll have forgot both place and me :—we came  
 Thither, and thus you told :

14. *Creusa then, and Creon's wide estate*  
*Lay far beyond your view.*

At that time you were far from dreaming of Creusa or her father Creon's dominions.

*Gasping a faint adieu.* While you gasped, &c.

15. *Deep smitten*, with love.

*Before my view the bulls, &c.* All the difficulties and dangers you have to encounter being presented to my mind.

17. *One asks, another has.* I ask, Creusa obtains.

18. *The goddess stands in gold.* There is in the temple a golden statue of the goddess.

19.

- " Fated, you reign omnipotent o'er me :  
 " My life you hold in stake.  
 " Suffice the power, if satisfaction be,  
 " But save, for glory's sake.

20.

- " By our sore ills, which you may ease, I call ;  
 " By your all-seeing sire,  
 " By triple Dian's visage, and by all  
 " The host of heaven entire,

21.

- " Oh maiden, pity me ! Make me and mine  
 " Ever devote to thee.  
 " If no disparagement with Greek to join,  
 " The gods so favour me,

22.

- " Rather my vacant spirit flit in air  
 " Than with another wed.  
 " By Juno, queen of nuptial vows, I swear,  
 " And her whose floor we tread !"

23.

This, but a part, much moved a simple maid :  
 You joined your hand to mine,  
 Shedding real tears. Are we by them betrayed ?  
 We fell to oaths so fine.

19. *Suffice the power if satisfaction be.* Content yourself with having the power to injure, if that be a satisfaction, but spare for the sake of your glory.

20. *By your all-seeing sire.* Sol, the sun, who was the father of her father, *Ætes*.

*By triple Dian's visage.* Diana has the epithet triple on account of her three names: Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, and Hecate in hell.

21. *With Greek to join,* to marry a Grecian.

*The gods so favour me* as to make me acceptable and become the object of your choice.

22. *Rather my vacant spirit flit in air.* Rather let my spirit be separated from the body and flit in air.

*And her whose floor we tread.* Diana, in whose temple they are.

23. *A simple maid,* herself, Medea.

## 24.

The brazen-footed bulls endure the yoke ;  
 The share divides the field :  
 The lands by germinating dragon-teeth are broke  
 And forth armed soldiers yield.

## 25.

Myself who wrought the spell saw fearfully  
 The crescent warriors rise,  
 Till, the battalion ripe in panoply,  
 Each by his neighbour dies.

## 26.

The scaled indormient dragon next one sees,  
 Breasting the ground along.  
 Where then your spouse and fortune? Where,  
 'tween seas,  
 Your Isthmian Argive throng?

## 27.

Twas I,—barbarian now, too poor to keep,—  
 I, of venefic stain,  
 I closed those flaming lids in medicined sleep,  
 And gave the fleece to gain.

## 28.

A father cheated, home, friends, country left :  
 Exile with you paid cost.  
 Fair fame besmirched, a prey to foreign theft :  
 Dear mother, sister lost.

24. *The brazen-footed bulls.* Same note already referred to, note 3, Letter VI., which serves equally to explain verses 24, 25, and part of 26.

25. *Ripe in panoply.* Full grown and complete in armour.

26. *Where then your spouse?* Future spouse Creusa, mentioned note 14.

*Where, 'tween seas, your Isthmian Argive throng?* Where were then your Grecian followers from the isthmus of Corinth?

27. *Of venefic stain.* Having the stain of a reputation for poisoning.

*Those flaming eyes.* The eyes of the dragon.

28. *A father cheated.* Her father, Æetes, cheated by her helping Jason to succeed in his enterprise.

*A prey to foreign theft.* To your artifices, a stranger who stole my affections, and, after possession, abandon me.

29.

My brother, the companion of my flight——  
 His tale we can't go through!  
 The hand durst perpetrate, but dares not write!—  
 Would his lot mine!—with you.

30.

Untrembling yet, such done what could one  
 We trust us to the sea. [dread?  
 Where were the gods? their vengeance merited  
 Fraud and credulity.

31.

Would the Symplegades had closed and smashed,  
 Commingled both our bones!  
 Or that to Scylla's hounds we had been dashed!  
 Debt to th' ingrate she owns.

29. *His tale we cannot go through.* The tragical tale of her murder of Absyrtus, mentioned in the Argument.

*Would his lot mine!—with you.* I would willingly be murdered too, provided you were murdered with me.

30.

.....*Their vengeance merited  
 Fraud and credulity.*

Your fraud in marrying me to obtain your ends, and then to abandon me, merited the vengeance of the gods, and my credulity in trusting to your falsehood, led me to deeds which merited their vengeance also.

The annotator of the Delphin edition observes on this line, *Tu fraudis penas credulitatis ego*, that Ovid would no doubt and with more truth have used the word *crudelitatis* instead of *credulitatis* had it suited his metre. Our line would then be *Your fraud, my cruelty*. But I am inclined to think that Ovid would not be disposed to change what he has written. The thought uppermost in Medea's mind is her credulity, which, though not deserving punishment *per se*, may well have earned a whipping for the sin she committed under its influence.

31. *The Symplegades.* Two island rocks at the entrance of the Black Sea, which, at a distance, seem to touch each other. She presents the image of their closing on the ship, and crushing them in their passage through the strait.

*Scylla's hounds.* Scylla is a dangerous rock on the Italian side of the Straits of Messina, against which the sea roars with tremendous noise. According to fable, it was once a beautiful girl of the same name, daughter of the giant Typhon. She fell in love with the sea-god Glaucus, which excited the jealousy of Circe, the princess magician, who afterwards nearly corrupted Ulysses, and who bewitched the body of Scylla, so as to convert the lower part of it into a mass of barking dogs. Horror-struck at the change, Scylla threw herself into the sea, and immediately became a rock, round which her dogs still continue to augment the howling of the waters.

*Debt to the ingrate she owns.* The poets sometimes mix the adventures of two Scyllas; here *vengeance for ingratitude* refers to another,

## 32.

Or in Charybdis' whirl, the pilot's dread,  
 Both at one suck enclosed !  
 But victor, safe, the Hæmonian ground you tread,  
 To the gods the fleece deposed.

## 33.

Need one name Pelias, whom his girls dissect  
 Under mistaken charm ?  
 'Tis fair to boast since others will object,  
 And for your good the harm.

## 34.

You dared (can words depict)—you dared to say,  
 “ Bid Æson's house adieu ! ”  
 I went ; the sole companions of my way  
 Two sons and love for you.

## 35.

And soon the sounds of Hymen reach my ear :  
 The nuptial lights illume,

daughter of Nisus, king of Megara, who, when her father's dominions were invaded by Minos, became enamoured of the assailant, and, to gain his love, betrayed the place into his hands. She was despised by Minos for her pains, and hence her debt to ingratitude. This Scylla also threw herself into the sea.

32. *Or in Charybdis' whirl.* This is a powerful whirlpool on the Sicily side of the Straits of Messina, and opposite to the rock Scylla; the passage between them was so dangerous that it became proverbial. *To avoid Scylla and fall into Charybdis* was, as we say, *out of the frying pan into the fire*. Fable makes the whirlpool also a woman, changed into that form by Jupiter as a punishment for having stolen and driven away the oxen which Hercules, as we have seen, Letter IX., verse 23, had sent to Italy after having killed Geryon.

33. *Need one name Pelias.* We have seen in the Argument of Letter VI. that Pelias was the usurper of a throne due to Jason. The argument of the present letter has also shown that Medea, on arriving with Jason at his home, performed a miracle on his father Æson, by restoring him to the vigour of youth. The daughters of Pelias prayed her to do the same by their father, who had been the mover of all Jason's labours and dangers. Guilefully Medea undertook the task, telling them it would be necessary first to kill the old man, then separate his members, and boil them in an enchanted cauldron. All this being done by the daughters, Medea refused to carry the charm any farther.

*And for your good the harm.* Since the mischief I did in making the daughters of Pelias avenge you on their father, your enemy and the usurper of your throne, the cause of your dangers and sufferings, was for your good ; it procured you the satisfaction of revenge ; in causing his death, therefore, I did you real service.

The flute and harp pour forth their voices clear :  
Me grief and spite consume.

36.

Trembling and doubting the foul sin can be,  
A chill runs through my brain :  
The gay crowd chant "Hymen, O Hymenæe !"  
The nearer more the pain.

37.

Servants there wandering weep and hide their  
tear :  
The news to me who 'd tell ?  
More satisfied, Heaven knows, the less to hear,  
Too sad whate'er befell.

38.

Our youngest boy, being bid, to him no pain,  
Stood at the folding gate :  
"Back, mother, back," he cried, "'tis father's train;  
He's in the car of state."

39.

Oh, then we beat our breast and wept aloud,  
Nor spared our face to tear :  
'Twas in my mind to rush into the crowd,  
And strip her dizen'd hair.

40.

Scarcely refraining madly to out-cry,  
"He's mine !" with uplift voice.  
O injured sire, be glad ! O land I fly,  
Absyrtus' shade, rejoice !

---

38. *Hymen, O Hymenæe.* The first words of a nuptial hymn.

40. *O ! injured sire be glad ! oh land I fly,*  
*Absyrtus' shade, rejoice !*

Since by my present sufferings you are all revenged for the injuries  
I have done you.



41.

Ah me ! home, throne, friends, kindred, country  
 Now he, who weighed them all ! [lost !  
 Bulls to reduce, and serpents scale-embossed !  
 Before one man to fall !

42.

I, who with medicined, spell-wrought fires assail,  
 Avoid not my own flame !  
 Are magic, herbs, and art of no avail ?  
 All hell is put to shame !

43.

No day delights, at eve no sorrows cease ;  
 No sleep restores this brain !  
 Dragons I soothe—my mind can get no ease :  
 Art to myself is vain.

44.

A harlot holds those limbs preserved by me !  
 I sow that she may reap !  
 Haply to charm the fool with braggery,  
 Silence inept to keep.

45.

You'll newly blame our looks, assert new crime :  
 She smiles, enjoys our fall.  
 Let the minx laugh, on Tyrian couch sublime,  
 She'll weep and pay for all.

46.

Be knife or flame at hand, or well-drugged bowl,  
 None 'scape Medea's hate.  
 But if chance will prayer touch your iron soul,  
 Hear my due style abate.

---

41. *Now he who weighed them all.* Now I lose him who was worth and compensated all to me.

42. *Avoid not my own flame.* The flames of love and anger with which I burn.

44. *A harlot*, meaning her rival, Creusa.

*The fool*, meaning again Creusa.

46. *Prayer touch*, that prayer touch.

*Due style*, the style of severity and reproach which is due to your falsehood.

47.

supple we can be as erst you were,  
Even at your feet to kneel.  
ough I seem vile, our progeny yet spare,  
Let them no step-dame feel.

48.

y're like you, Jason, and my wrath allays  
Your form in theirs to see.  
! by yon sky, bright with my grandsire's rays,  
By our two children's plea,

49.

tore that bed for which are riven all ties :  
Good faith in love e'er keep.  
beg not against bulls or spears that rise,  
Nor that a snake may sleep :

50.

claim our own : 'tis but a right you yield,  
By whom we mother grew.  
t the dower ? 'Twas paid there in the field,  
Impregn'd with teeth by you.

51.

dower ?—The golden ram with the rich fleece,  
Which, asked, you'd not restore.  
dower ?—You safe. My dower ?—The youth  
of Greece :  
Compare the wealth she bore.

---

*With my grandsire's rays.* With the rays of the sun : through  
other *Æetes* she is granddaughter of Sol, the sun.  
*our two children's plea.* By the just claim of our two children.

*For which are riven all ties,* to obtain which I offended my family,  
cut all connection with them.

*beg not against bulls.* I ask not your love as you did mine, to  
conquer a certain object, vanquishing bulls, soldiers, or a dragon.

*Is it the dower ?* Is it because you received no dowry with me,  
your new wife is rich in possessions.

*whom, you, by whom.*

*pregn'd with teeth ;* where you planted dragon's teeth to grow into  
armed men.

*Which asked you'd not restore.* If you repudiate the wife, you  
should restore the dowry ; but were the golden fleece, which I say is my  
dowry, to be re-demanded, you would not restore it.

*dower ? You safe.... The youth of Greece.* My dowry is the deed  
of giving you and your companions, the young men of Greece.

## 52.

That you have life, a spouse, a fine estate —  
That you can wrong, is mine,  
But presently —— or why anticipate?  
Wrath in big threats is fine!

## 53.

Where anger leads I follow, e'en to repent.  
We've helped a cheat: that's sore.  
Look to 't the god by whom my heart is rent,  
I muse what I'll do more.

---

52. *Is mine*, is owing to my assistance.

*But presently* I'll be revenged.

*Why anticipate?* Why develop beforehand all the revenge I meditate.

53. *I follow e'en to repent.* Whatever my anger suggests, I'll do the risk of repenting afterwards.

*Look to it the god.* If I am led to the sin of murder, the gods have permitted such provocation as I have received may thank themselves for it.



## LETTER XIII.

### LAODAMIA TO PROTESILAÛS.

#### ARGUMENT.

Protesilaüs, a Thessalian prince, son of Iphiclus, on his way to Troy with other Grecian princes on board a fleet of forty sail, was weather-bound at Aulis, a port in Boeotia. His wife, Laodamia, daughter of Acastus and Laodatheia, hearing of his detention there, loving her husband with the tenderest affection and tormented by omens and dreams, addresses this letter to conjure him to be mindful of the oracle of Apollo, and abstain from the too dangerous services of the war. This oracle had declared to the Greeks that the first who should land on Trojan ground would perish. Now Protesilaüs, moved by his ardent courage, did land first, and died by the hand of Hector.

#### 1.

LAODAMIA, the Hæmonian spouse,  
To her Hæmonian lord,  
Protesilas. Health with her dearest vows  
Accompany the word!

#### 2.

Wind-bound at Aulis you are long detain'd:  
Here foully fair the wind.  
At home had but retentive gales constrained,  
Foul weather had been kind.

#### 3.

More kisses, love, more cautions had been given:  
We had so much to say.  
By favouring breezes from my soul was riven  
More than itself that day.

---

The four first lines answer to two of the Latin.

1. *Hæmonian*, Thessalian, from Mount Hæmus. The epithet applies to both parties, since the father of each reigned over a part of Thessaly.

2. *Here foully fair the wind*. When you were yet here, the wind, foul to my wishes, was vexingly fair for your departure.

*Had been*, would have been.

## 4.

Away on board, from my embraces wrung,  
Protesilas, you hie.  
Grief-struck, of speech bereft, hardly my tongue  
Articulates "good-bye."

## 5.

With Aquilo, the canvass onward bore  
Protesilas away.  
While sight can compass, mine persists to pore,  
Distinguish as it may.

## 6.

Still, when no longer it decipher'd you,  
'The sail my sense retained ;  
At length, all image vanished from my view.  
When nought but sea remained,

## 7.

Thee gone, night come, lifeless, as they relate,  
I sank upon the beach.  
Poor mother and Acastus, in sore strait  
To renovate my speech,

## 8.

Recalled in fine the power, but to deplore  
They did not let me die.  
With life renewed, renewed the tears that pour  
From my full-teeming eye.

## 9.

Now listless, on my hair nor bead nor band ;  
No shining robe my wear ;  
But, like those touched with Bacchus' vintage  
Mad, wandering here and there. [wand,

---

5. *Aquilo*, a name of the north wind, which favoured the first part of Protesilaüs' voyage down the Negropont channel.

7. *Acastus*, the father of Laodamia.

9. *But like those touched*. Bacchus, the god of wine, bore a wand or spear decked with vine-leaves and ivy, which they called a thyrsus; whoever he touched with it became mad. This figures the ebriety caused by the use of wine. The votaries of the god bore these wands in

## 10.

Phyllian dames assembled here entreat  
 Me,—“Wear your royal dress.”  
 Were fine! my robe with musk and rose replete!  
 Fights he at Troy the less?

## 11.

Mass and helm out there, shall here be seen  
 New gawds and pompous style?  
 Let his toil be figured by our mien,  
 Splendour inured the while.

## 12.

Paris bright, in war be slowly fired  
 As you are perfid guest!  
 Would you had ne'er the Spartan spouse admired,  
 Or she been unimpressed!

## 13.

Deep, good Menelas, a jilt you mourn,  
 Dole throughout Greece to move.  
 Heaven grant our omen swerve and he return,  
 Sacred his arms to Jove!

## 14.

At war's mention ever terrified,  
 My tears bedew the ground.  
 Troy, Simois, Xanthus, Tenedos, and Ide,  
 Are names of fearful sound.

---

processions, and performed the most grotesque dances, uttering the wildest howling that can be conceived.

*Phyllian*, from Phyllos, a town of Thessaly.

*O Paris bright*. Paris, the son of Priam and cause of the war by the rape of Helen, was remarkably handsome.

*Menelaüs*, the husband of Helen.

*Heaven grant our omen swerve*. Alluding to a bad omen to which he refers again, verse 23.

*And he, Protesilaüs*.

*He sacrificed his arms to Jove*. His arms to be hung up in the temple of Jove as a sacred trophy.

*Troy, Simois, Xanthus, Tenedos, and Ide*. Names of places near the seat of war. The city Troy, the rivers Simois and Xanthus, the island of Tenedos, and Mount Ida.

## 15.

The guest knew well, or had not been so bold,  
 A support would not lack.  
 He came, 'tis said, conspicuous in gold,  
 Troy's wealth upon his back.

## 16.

With ships and men, whereby a chieftain wins,  
 His quota of the realm.  
 To all this fell the sister of the twins:  
 Our Greece it may o'erwhelm.

## 17.

I dread one Hector. Paris spake him fell,  
 Harder than steel in fight.  
 Avoid that Hector if you love me well;  
 Ever his fear in sight.

## 18.

While him you shun, cautious of others too,  
 Deem many Hectors there:  
 Mindful to think, when hotly you pursue,  
 "Laoda bids beware."

## 19.

If Ilion must by Grecian fall, thee safe,  
 Fall Ilion as it may.  
 Atrides hunt the youth who makes him chafe:  
 The robbed the robber pay.

15. *The guest*, Paris, who came as a guest to Menelaüs. See *Argument*, Letter I. But we shall presently have his own letter to Helen.  
*Or had not*, or would not have.

16. *The sister of the twins*, Helen, the sister of Castor and Pollux, and object of Paris' rape.

*Our Greece it may o'erwhelm*, it may be the ruin of this our Greece.

19. *Atrides hunt the youth who makes him chafe:*  
*The robbed the robber pay.*

Let Menelaüs who has been robbed hunt down the youth Paris, who has robbed him, till retribution be made.

## 20.

Let Menelas go win, as just, his plea :  
 He combats for his wife.  
 'Tis not your case : strive you to live for me :  
 Return and bring me life.

## 21.

Spare one, O Dardans, in a host of foes,  
 Nor with his life kill mine.  
 Not his the rage with uplift sword who goes  
 To lead the slaughtering line.

## 22.

Stronger in arms who combat with good will :  
 Protesilas let love.  
 I will confess, once I'd have held you still,  
 But fear'd my fears to move.

## 23.

'Twas when you left the hall, Troyward to wend,  
 On the stair you nearly fell.  
 Shuddering with dread I prayed, "May that por-  
 "Returning safe and well." [tend

## 24.

Now this is said that you avoid the van :  
 Vain be my terrors found.  
 Some one the Fates demand, be who it can,  
 First treading Ilian ground.

21. *Spare one, O Dardans.* The country named Troy, from one of its early kings, Tros, was originally called Dardania from Dardanus, the chief of the earliest settlers there.

22. *Once I would have held you still.* I wished to persuade you to remain at home, but dared not speak my thoughts of fear.

23.

*On the stair you nearly fell.*

*Returning safe and well.*

The first line contains a bad omen, which she feels, shuddering. By the second, her love strains to interpret it into a good one, unwilling, as she has just said, to give way to thoughts of fear.

24. *Some one the Fates demand.* Alluding to the oracle mentioned in the Argument.



## 25.

Unhappy she who first shall have to mourn !  
 You Heaven from rashness save !  
 Of thousand sail be you the thousandth borne  
 O'er the last weary wave.

## 26.

This too observe : go last down the ship's side ;  
 Why haste to foreign strand ?  
 Returning, ply with sail and oar the tide,  
 And urge your keel to land.

## 27.

Sleeps Phœbus, or on high his chariot whirls,  
 At eve or morn, we sigh.  
 Yet more at eve, dearer than day to girls  
 In love's embrace who lie.

## 28.

Our pillow nightly hankers after dreams :  
 False joys please wanting true.  
 Ever thy form : ah me ! but pale it seems,  
 And mournfully to rue.

## 29.

We start from sleep ; invoke the shades of night :  
 No altar unadored.  
 Throw incense, dropping tears, which seem t'  
 Like burning spirit poured. [ignite

## 30.

You, once returned, when here these arms enchain,  
 With joy my sense will ache ;  
 When on connubial couch together lain,  
 You full recital make.

27. *Sleeps Phœbus, or high his chariot whirls.* Whether the sun be gone down or shine high in the heavens.

28. *Our pillow.* I, when on my pillow.  
*Ever thy form* presents itself to my dream.

## 31.

middle tale occurs, much as it please,  
 A pause of kisses long.  
 sses are apt the place of words to seize,  
 And make a livelier tongue.

## 32.

t thoughts of Asia rise and wat'ry graves,  
 And flattering hopes all fail.  
 o full of terrors are the winds and waves,  
 Yet spite of them you sail.

## 33.

me brave the wind, though home invite to joy :  
 Despising it you roam.  
 hile Neptune bars the progress to his Troy :  
 Turn then, O Greeks, turn home.

## 34.

hither away ? oh hear the storm forefend.  
 No chance this : 'tis from Heaven !  
 hat asks your war ? a harlot home to wend ?  
 To Greece, men, while 'tis given.

## 35.

at this is vain : what's done is past recall :  
 Mild winds then bear you far.  
 appier Troy's dames ! Though seen their cham-  
 pions' fall,  
 Though near the hostile war,

1. *You roam.* You undertake a voyage far away from home. *While Neptune bars the progress to his Troy.* The principal gods, protectors of Troy, were Neptune, Venus, Apollo, Mars : that is, navigation, love, the arts, and arms. The chief celestial allies of the Greeks were Juno and Minerva : that is, power and wisdom. Jupiter, or the providence of heaven, was impartial.

2. *A harlot home.* Helen to Sparta. *To Greece, men, while 'tis given.* Make for Greece, O ye men, while yet in your power.

## 36.

The bride herself, at morning, ready is  
 To arm her warrior spouse.  
 Each sturdy buckle set, she takes a kiss,  
 Sensation sweet to rouse.

## 37.

She leads him forth, holds him awhile to say,  
 "Bring back these arms to Jove."  
 With this injunction, wending on his way,  
 He heeds for his house's love.

## 38.

Returned, she takes his shield, relieves his head,  
 Pressing it to her own.  
 We, far away, all misadventure dread :  
 Things feared to us are done.

## 39.

While banished hence afar, in foreign lands,  
 Your waxen figure 's here,  
 By me caressed, to it my heart expands  
 In softest souvenir.

## 40.

Truly a form it more than seems: add voice,  
 Protesilas 't would be.  
 'Tis my sweet commune, image of my choice,  
 As it could answer me.

## 41.

By your return, by you, my gods, I swear,  
 By days of love to come,  
 By that dear front,—may it live grey locks to  
 By all the joys of home, [wear,—

---

38. *We.* The wives of Greece.

40. *As it could.* As if it could.

41. *By your return, by you, my gods.* I swear by yourself and your safe return, which are the two deities I adore.

## 42.

ll come to you wherever you may call :

In health, the gods so speed !

and now let one last bidding sum up all :

If you love me, take heed.

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*1. In health, the gods so speed.* May Heaven grant that I find you in  
lth.

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LETTER XIV.

HYPERMNESTRA TO LYNCEUS.

ARGUMENT.

Danaus and Egyptus were the sons of Belus: the former by his seven wives had fifty daughters, the latter fifty sons. Egyptus proposed a general marriage between the two families, the fifty young men to the fifty girls. Now Danaus, having learnt from an oracle that he would die by the hand of a son-in-law, in order to escape the danger to his ship and came to Argos, thus avoiding the proposed connection. Egyptus, indignant at seeing his offer thus rejected, sent his fifty sons with an army to besiege their uncle, forbidding them to return if they had either killed Danaus or espoused his daughters. Danaus then, constrained by the siege, consented to give his daughters in marriage to their cousins. To each of the young women, however, on the wedding day he gave a dagger, with injunction to use it on the husbands in the nuptial bed when, heated with wine and feasting, they should all be wrapt in the first profound sleep. The girls executed their father's order except Hypermnestra, who spared Lynceus, her spouse, recommending him to fly as soon as possible. Now when Danaus found that the deed had been done by all his daughters, except Hypermnestra, he caused her to be put in prison, there to wait the punishment of death for disobedience. From her cell she addresses this letter to her husband, begging him either to bring help, or, failing in that, and if she should be put to death, to have her interred with all due funeral ceremony. She was, however, liberated by Lynceus after he had slain Danaus, and thus fulfilled the oracle.

1.

FROM Hypermnestra to the one unslain
Of fifty royal brothers:
Herself confined in ignominious chain,
For charity to others.

2.

Guilty that she refused her spouse to kill,
Praised had she shown him dead:
A guilty praise to do a father's will,
Her husband poniarded.

3.

Me rather let the wedding torch consume,
 By me inviolate:
 Rather the sword, by my harsh father's doom,
 Myself exterminate:

4.

Than he should make me say, "Would I had not,"
 Or grieve a worthy deed.
 Danaus and cruel sisters wail the blot:
 Tears are their action's meed.

5.

My heart recoils at memory of that night:
 It thrills me to the bone.
 You deem this hand could do? It shrinks to
 The deed surmised its own. [write

6.

'Twas thus: Sol in the west had laid his head,
 Twilight the day relieved,
 When we beneath Ægyptus' roof were led,
 All armed: th' old man received.

7.

Resplendent lamps of gold bedaze the eye:
 Incense the gods eschew.
 "Hymen, O Hymenæe;" the people cry;
 Juno and he withdrew.

3. *By me inviolate.* My sisters violated the marriage ceremony by murdering their husbands, which I did not.

4. *Would I had not* done the honest and charitable act of saving my husband.

5. *The deed surmised its own.* The deed which you surmise it could have perpetrated.

6. *When we;* my sisters and myself.

7. *Incense the gods eschew.* The eye is dazzled also with flames of incense which, on this occasion, is odious to the gods.

Hymen, O Hymenæe, the nuptial hymn.

Juno and he withdrew. He, Hymen, the god of marriage, and Juno its protectress, also withdrew in disgust.

8.

Later, all flushed with wine, the husband crowd,
Fresh flowers about their hair,
Each to his bed retired, all talking loud.
The grave lay hidden there.

9.

Oppressed with sleep, they drew a heavy breath :
Silence all Argos through.
And soon there seemed as 'twere the groans of
Nor seemed, for it was true. [death ;

10.

The sinful sound my cheek of blood bereaves ;
On wedded couch of state,
Trembling, like ruffled corn or aspen leaves
That Zephyrs agitate ;

11.

E'en so my members shook, you sleeping sound :
'Twas soporific wine.
My father bade the knife : I rise, look round,
And, all aghast, take mine.

12.

'Tis truth you read. Three times uplift the sword,
Three times the deed to do :
Three times it met your neck,—let say the word,—
My father's sword to you.

13.

Nor heart nor piety the action dare,
Nor hand obsequious :
Rending my purple robe, my scented hair,
I moan lugubrious,

8. *Fresh flowers.* After carousing, they had renewed their garlands to enter the bridal chamber.

12. *Let say the word.* Permit the truth to be told.

13. *Nor heart nor piety.* Neither my feeling nor my good principles.

14.

" Hard, hard, oh Hypermnestra, yet the child
 " Must do her sire's command.
 " Die this one too. Alas! thy nature's mild,
 " The deed ill fits thy hand.

15.

" Now, while he's fast asleep, with sisters vie;
 " Can it be that all are slain?
 " If nature could this hand in murder dye,
 " Rather my blood the stain.

16.

" Why need an uncle's land attain't their lives?
 " It might to strangers go.
 " And say the men are guilty, why the wives
 " Be doomed to strike the blow?

17.

" Why swords for us? poor girls have other call,
 " To ply the distaff thread."
 This spoke, a pause, while tears abundant fall
 Upon your dormant head.

18.

Seeking embraces, once your hands, outspread,
 Came close upon the blade.—
 But now my sire, the slaves, the morn, I dread,
 And thus diversion made:

19.

" Wake, wake, Belides, now the only one,
 " Haste, or this night you die!"

14. *Alas, thy nature's mild*, O Hypermnestra!

15. *Rather my blood the stain*. It would be preferable to stain it with my own blood.

18. *And thus diversion made*. Thus, leaving reflections, I commenced action.

19. *Belides*. Son or descendant of Belus. The genealogy will be seen at the end of note 22.

Now the only one of your family remaining.

Alarmed you rise : the fumes of wine are gone ;
My weapon meets your eye.

20.

"What's that?" you ask. "Begone," I say again.
You went while yet 'twas time.
At break of day Dánaüs summed up the slain :
One wanted to the crime.

21.

He rated sore at death deprived of you :
At blood too sparing shed ;
Condemning me, to whom were praises due,
To jail unmerited.

22.

This, Juno's ire, too plain, from Io flowed,
To beast transformed, then god.
"Was't not enough a tender maiden lowed,
Nor could obey Jove's nod ?

23.

An heifer near her father's border grown,
In him her figure seen,
Attempting plaint, she utters vaccine moan,
Scared at her voice and mien.

22. *This, Juno's ire, too plain, from Io flowed.* She seeks the source of her misfortune from a remote date. Io, daughter of Inachus, was priestess of Juno at Argos, and so beautiful as to awake the love of Jupiter. The god, however, could not hide his amour from the keen eye of Juno, and to save his mistress from the goddess' vengeance, he changed her into an heifer: hence, *the tender maiden lowed*. Juno, seeing through the artifice, begged the animal, which a polite husband could not refuse; and Io was confided to the keeping of Argus, a shepherd with a hundred eyes. Jupiter, however, employed Mercury to kill this Argus, and set his Io at liberty. She wandered away under this transformation, continually tormented by a gad-fly, sent by Juno expressly to sting her. At length, she passed the sea to Egypt, where Jupiter restored her to her natural form, and she married the king Telegonus. Io, after her death, was worshipped as a goddess under the name of Isis. She is alluded to by Hypermnestra as being the origin of both their families, for Io had by Jupiter a son, Epaphus, who left a daughter, Lybya: she, by Neptune, became mother of Belus, who was grandfather of Lynceus and Hypermnestra.

23. *An heifer near her father's border.* Io's father, Inachus, was tutelary deity of a river of the same name in Peloponessus, on the borders of which he founded the city of Argos.

24.

You moan, poor wench, and peer into the stream,
 And count your horned feet?
 Whose charms a fear to Jove's proud sister seem
 Herb and green leaves must eat!

25.

Inhale the rill, those horns your terror move,
 Dreading yourself to wound.
 Endowed with beauty for the bed of Jove,
 And bare on the cold ground!

26.

O'er sea, o'er land, and cognate floods you roam:
 Land, sea, and flood receive.
 Whither, poor Io, wilt? No place a home:
 That form you cannot leave.

27.

Ah, whither wilt? You follow what you shun:
 Yourself you cannot fly.
 Yet Nile has seven fair ports; your suff'rings
 There find a remedy. [done,

28.

But why tell things that from yore time derive?
 My own gives sorrow birth.
 Father and uncle war: from home we drive
 To the far ends of earth.

24. *Whose charms....* You, whose charms.
Jove's proud sister. Juno.

25. *Inhale the rill.* If you drink at the rill.

26. *And cognate floods.* And other rivers related to your father's, or flowing into it.

27. *There find a remedy.* We have seen, note 22, that on the banks of the Nile she was restored by Jupiter to her natural form.

28. *To the far ends of earth.* Hypermnestra, after her long voyage from Africa, deems herself, in Peloponessus, at the end of the world.

29.

The latter, fierce, enjoys the realm alone ;
We a poor household keep :
Of all the brother crowd remains but one ;
Slayers and slain I weep.

30.

Sisters to me as well as brethren lost,
Both my compassion raise.
For that you live I die. What were the cost
Of guilt, if such of praise ?

31.

Unhappy hundredth of a hundred ties
Who fall, saved you alone !
But, Lynceus, me if you do not despise
And do approve things done,

32.

Or help or give my bones to endless sleep,
Consigned to furtive grave.
My tomb, whereon a pitying tear you 'll weep,
Let this inscription have :

33.

*Of Hypermnestra's virtue sad the meed ;
She saved her spouse and died.*
We've hardly ended, but these chains impede :
To write more is denied.

30. *What were the cost of guilt, if such of praise?* What would be the reward of a guilty action if such is the payment of a praiseworthy deed?

31. *Saved you alone.* You alone being saved.

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## LETTER XV.

### SAPPHO TO PHAON.

#### ARGUMENT.

Sappho was a charming poetess and musician of Lesbos, whose works were all extant long after Ovid's time, but have since perished, except two fragments, fortunately spared as examples of their beauty. As it too often happens among artists, Sappho was of dissolute manners. After various amours, she fixed her affections, ardent as her nature, on Phaon, a youth of the same island, who, having used a cosmetic which he had received from Venus herself, had become the most beautiful of men. For a time Phaon returned Sappho love for love, but being led by his affairs to Sicily, he there forgot her. Burning with all the fire natural to her temper, and fearing herself despised, she resolved to try a remedy said to cure the malady of love, and that was, to throw herself from a certain white rock into the sea; but before executing the design she addresses this letter to her lover, with a view to endeavour at least to bring him back to his former sentiments of tenderness, using all the arts of persuasion, setting forth her merits, and exciting his compassion by the picture of her sufferings; leaving, in fine, no chord untouched that may make an impression on his heart.

#### 1.

Is 't on inspection of our running hand  
The autographer you know?  
Or to the verse's end must we be scanned  
To tell our name, SAPPHO?

#### 2.

You 'll ask perchance why the alternate strain,  
From her whom lyrics suit?  
A mind to weep.—Elegiac lines complain;  
Too cheerly sings the lute.

---

1. *Running hand.* Practice, as an author, gave her a fair pretension to write well and currently.

2. *The alternate strain.* The verse alternately hexameter and pentameter, or six feet and five; a measure which is also called elegiac.

*From her whom lyrics suit.* All whose poetry has hitherto been of the lyric kind, or adapted to music.

## 3.

I burn as when hot breezes fan the flame  
 On fields of lighted wheat.  
 The distant Etna boasts of Phaon's name :  
 I burn with Etna's heat.

## 4.

No verse occurs to me to fit the lyre :  
 True melody is free.  
 Pyrrhian, Methymnian, Lesbian choir,  
 Have no delight for me.

## 5.

Anactory's despised, and Cydno too :  
 The charm of Atthis gone.  
 A hundred others left, and, wretch, for you,  
 Who have me all alone.

## 6.

'Tis your sweet mirth, and that too lovely face,  
 Face for my sight too fair !  
 With bow and lute you'd take Apollo's place :  
 Horned, a young Bacchus were.

3. *The distant Etna boasts of Phaon's name.* Since Phaon is now in Sicily, where that mountain is situated.

4. *No verse occurs to me to fit the lyre.* I can compose no songs now.  
*True melody is free.* Can only rise from perfect liberty of feeling.

*Pyrrhian, Methymnian, Lesbian choir.* The concerts of the towns of Pyrrha and Methymna, and those of the isle of Lesbos in general. Some commentators, by the word *Pyrrhiades*, understand the Muses, in which sense we might have used the word *Pierian*; it would have suited our harmony incomparably better; but we believe that *Pyrrhian* as above explained is the true sense. The next verse, in fact, names some of her too-intimate friends frequenting those concerts.

5. *Anactorie, Cydno, Atthis.* Three young women, her intimates and favourites.

*Wretch.* This word, as the following lines clearly show, is used in a kind sense.

6. *Apollo.* The most beautiful of the gods, who presided over the arts and light. As god of light he is often called Phœbus, as in the next verse.

*Horned a young Bacchus were.* Named with reference to wine, Bacchus is often represented horned, like the satyrs.

## 7.

Phœbus loved Daphne ; Evan Gnoësis too :  
 Neither in lyrics read.  
 The Muses ope their treasures to my view :  
 My fame far trumpeted.

## 8.

Far as Alcæus', of my land and art,  
 Though deeper sounds his lyre.  
 Nature, who has denied me beauty's part,  
 Paid with poetic fire.

## 9.

Short as I be, my name hath crossed the seas ;  
 By fame my stature try.  
 Perseus, Andromeda, though dark, could please :  
 She wore her country's dye.

7. *Phœbus loved Daphne.* Phœbus, or Apollo, became enamoured of Daphne, a nymph begotten of the earth by the river Pineus. She fled from his embraces, and, on being overtaken, invoked the gods to her help, and was immediately converted into a laurel. The leaves of that tree became ever after Apollo's crown.

*Evan Gnoësis too.* Evan is Bacchus, just alluded to, the name being derived from an ejaculation used in his worship. Gnoësis, or Gnoëssia, designates Ariadne, from the town of Gnoësis, in the island of Crete, her country. We have seen, Letter II., verse 20, that Bacchus took her to wife when abandoned by Theseus, and that her car was drawn by tigers. We have seen also Letter X., from Ariadne to Theseus.

*Neither in lyrics read.* Neither Daphne, or Ariadne or Gnoësis.

8. *Alcæus*, a Lesbian lyric poet, contemporary with Sappho, and of whose works also but small fragments remain. They are found with those of Sappho and Pindar, annexed to some editions of Anacreon's odes.

*Though deeper sounds his lyre.* Though his style be more grave.

9. *Perseus, Andromeda, though dark, could please.* Andromeda was a princess of Ethiopia, daughter of Cepheus and Cassiopeia. All three are constellations of the northern hemisphere. Their kingdom was deluged by Neptune, and ravaged by a sea monster, to punish a boast of Cassiopeia, who pretended to surpass all the Nereids, and even Juno, in beauty. The only means accorded to relieve the country from this pest was to expose Andromeda to the monster, and with that intent she was chained to a rock ; but Perseus, then returning through the air on his flying horse, Pegasus, from his victory over the three sister Gorgons, and bearing with him the head of Medusa, the only one of them not immortal, presented the terrible countenance to the monster, which was immediately converted into a rock. Perseus then delivered Andromeda, loved, and married her. He also, after death, became a constellation.

## 10.

Oft the white pigeon couples with the pied,  
     The green bird with the dove.  
 Shall you love none till by your beauty tried,  
     You 'll never, never love.

## 11.

In reading 'twas you found my beauties glow :  
     " What verve can equal this ?"  
 Quoth you. I sang,—Love treasures all, you  
     My ditty won a kiss. [know,—

## 12.

And that pleased too : pleased you were every  
     But most of all for love. [way,  
 Now 'tis Sicilia's nymphs. Brief here I 'll stay,  
     Sicilia soon to prove.

## 13.

Sicilian fair ones, urge our wanderer's sail :  
     Sicilians, maid or bride,  
 Beware he tell you the same flattering tale  
     Whereby we're edified.

## 14.

And Erycina, of those hills the fame,  
     Your votary defend.  
 Shall adverse fortune ever rest the same,  
     No hope for bad to mend ?

10. *Shall you love none.* If you shall love none.

12. Four lines are omitted in the middle of this stanza.

*Brief here I 'll stay.* I will not remain long in Lesbos, but follow you soon to Sicily.

14. *And Erycina of those hills the fame.* Erycina is a name of Venus, from her temple on Mount Eryx, in Sicily. The mount took its name from Eryx, the builder of the temple, who was Venus' own son by Butes, a noted pugilist. Eryx succeeded to his father's art, and was killed in a bout with Hercules ; a finale of fisty-cuffs which is not yet quite out of fashion in merry England.

*Your votary defend.* Defend me, who am your votary.

## 15.

At seven years old inurned my sire's remains,  
 Precocious tears I shed.  
 My spendthrift brother sad unworthy chains  
 Of love discredited.

## 16.

Reduced, with agile oar he scour'd the wave,  
 Lost fortune to regain :  
 Me ever hating for the advice I gave :  
 Ill will for honest pain.

## 17.

And, that acerbity should have no pause,  
 A daughter racks my mind :  
 Last you come here, of sorrow a new cause ;  
 We sailed with adverse wind.

## 18.

Dishevel'd locks upon my bosom bare,  
 No gems my wrist confine :  
 Sordid my dress, no trinket in my hair,  
 No myrrh, no musk divine.

## 19.

Dress ? and for whom ? Alas, with him afar,  
 Whom shall my toilet please ?  
 My heart, too frail with Cupid to make war,  
 From love can never cease.

## 20.

Whether at birth the Sisters gave my part :  
 " Here no hard thread to wind ;"  
 Or that, with taste addict to works of art,  
 Thalia made soft my mind,

15. *My spendthrift brother.* Named Charaxus. He loved a courtesan called Rhodope, who, as it occurs with her successors in our own time, helped the youth briskly through his fortune, till at length he went to sea, and became a pirate.

17. *A daughter.* Named Cleis, whom Sappho had by a man named Cericla.

20. *The Sisters.* The Parcae or Fates (see Letter XII. note 1).  
*Thalia.* One of the nine Muses, patroness of lyric poetry and comedy. Melpomene was the Muse of epic verse and tragedy.



## 21.

Is 't strange at puberty if love escape,  
 Oozing the fibres through?  
 On him, Aurora, was to fear thy rape,  
 But Cephalus was new.

## 22.

Him did but Phoebe see, who sees from far,  
 Phaon were now asleep.  
 Him Venus had borne off in ivory car,  
 But Mars the theft might keep.

## 23.

Oh lovely age, between the boy and man!  
 Oh, glory of thy sphere!  
 Come to these arms, to love me if you can,  
 But let me love you dear.

## 24.

Writing, my eyes with plenteous tears are red:  
 See here what drops bedew!  
 Being sure to go, at least you might have said,  
 "My Lesbian girl, adieu!"

21.

*On him, Aurora, was to fear thy rape,  
 But Cephalus was new.*

I should have feared, Aurora, that you would have carried him off, but you had too lately carried off Cephalus. (See Letter IV. verse 24, "Cephalus was great in wood-craft.")

22.

*Him did but Phoebe see, who sees from far,  
 Phaon were still asleep.*

Phoebe, or Diana, or Luna (the moon), is said to have been so struck with the young shepherd Endymion,—whom, for his ambition to be immortal, Jupiter had condemned to live for ever, but in perpetual sleep, on Mount Latmos,—that she descended every night from heaven to contemplate his beauty. Sappho suggests then, that if Phoebe, by chance, saw Phaon asleep in a similar way, she would keep him so to enjoy the contemplation of his loveliness.

*Him Venus had borne off in ivory car,  
 But Mars the theft might keep.*

Venus would have been smitten with his beauty, and carried him off in her ivory car, drawn by doves, as she did Adonis, were it not that Mars, her accredited lover, might himself be enamoured of the beautiful youth, and keep him for himself.

## 25.

You bore from me no tear, no parting kiss ;  
 I knew nor doubt nor fear :  
 Of yours what left but wrong ? and yet, I wiss,  
 Pledges of love you wear.

## 26.

No mandate I, nor any should have given,  
 Except,—“ Remember me !”  
 By your dear love, from this heart never riven,  
 By the Muses' symphony,

## 27.

When certain voice repeated, “ Joy is fled !”  
 Sappho could speak nor weep :  
 Tear to her eye, sound to her voice was dead,  
 As in eternal sleep.

## 28.

No shame when sense returned to beat my breast,  
 To cry and rend my hair,  
 As a fond mother for her loss distressed,  
 Whose son a corpse they bear :

## 29.

Charaxus sees and glories in my tears :  
 Passing, repassing still ;  
 “ What ails she ?” saying, as my grief appears ;  
 “ Her Cleïs is not ill ?”

25. *Of yours what left but wrong?* You leave me no souvenir but the injury of having abandoned me.

*Pledges of love you wear.* You retain in your memory many proofs of my ardent affection.

27. *When certain voice.* The internal feeling of the conscience.

*Sappho could speak nor weep.* Could neither speak nor weep.

29. *Charaxus and Cleïs.* Her brother and daughter.

*“What ails she?” saying as my shame appears.* “What is the matter?” asks he, when the shameful cause of my grief appears.

*“Her Cleïs is not ill!”* In irony: he knows the real cause of her grief, and also that she is rather indifferent as to Cleïs.

## 30.

Two masters none can serve: love banished  
 All sordid grew my dress: [shame:  
 But Phaon to my sleeping senses came,  
 In dreams of loveliness.

## 31.

Bright with himself, though he be far away,  
 Ah, joys gone ere you're told!  
 Locked in his amorous embrace I lay:  
 His form these arms enfold.

## 32.

Meanwhile my fancy utters words like real:  
 The senses are awake.  
 His kisses warm upon my lips I feel,  
 Apt both to give and take.

## 33.

'Tis vision! all mere vision! cruel spite,  
 Such joy can only seem!  
 Titan is up to show all things in light,  
 And me 'tis but a dream!—

## 34.

Now to the cave or grove;—nor grove nor cave  
 Can aught. Once they have given—  
 Such bliss! Dishevelled there I roam and rave,  
 As by Erichtho driven.

## 35.

The conscious cave with chalky rock inlaid,  
 Mygdonian stone to me!  
 Hard by the dell so oft our grassy bed,  
 Shaded luxuriantly.

33. *Titan*. A name of the sun.

*And me 'tis but a dream*. And to show to me that it is all a dream.

34. *Erichtho*. One of the Furies.

35. *Mygdonian stone*. Marble. Mygdonia, on the borders of Phrygia, having quarries of that stone of the finest quality. Sappho esteems the chalk which reminds her of her love above the finest marble.

## 36.

Absent the place's lord and mine, mere grove :  
 Its charm with Phaon fled :  
 The imprinted turf reminds of by-gone love,  
 Yet unobliterated.

## 37.

I lie me down to touch where erst you lay ;  
 The grass imbibes my tears.  
 " He's gone!" the very foliage seems to say ;  
 No warbling bird one hears.

## 38.

Progne alone, revenged with right yet blame,  
 On Itys wont to call :  
 Itys the bird, Sappho on Phaon's name,  
 The rest is silence all.

## 39.

There is a sacred fount, as crystal clear,  
 Where many deem a god :  
 A lotus vast, itself a wood, hangs near,  
 The ground a tender sod.

38.

*Progne alone, revenged with right yet blame,  
 On Itys wont to call.*

Progne is now a swallow, but was originally a beautiful girl, daughter of Pandion king of Athens, and married to Tereus king of Thrace. At the court of her husband she pined after her sister Philomela, and begged her husband to go and fetch her; this he did, but unhappily became enamoured of the younger sister, and used violence to possess her. To keep his crime unknown, according to the usual progress of sin, he committed a still greater. He cut out the tongue of poor Philomela that she might tell no tales, confined her in an habitation apart, and told his wife that she had died on the road. Progne put on mourning, and got over the loss, but about a year afterwards she was informed of the existence of her sister, saw her, and, though deprived of speech, the latter found means to make known the whole atrocious truth. Thence Progne executed a revenge—*rightful* but *blamable*, for she killed little Itys, her child by Tereus, had his members cooked and served up to the father, Tereus, who ate of the dish, and after supper asked for the child. Instead of the boy came Philomela, and the queen explained on what meats her husband had feasted. Tereus would instantly have killed the women, but they were all suddenly metamorphosed into birds. Progne became a swallow, Philomela a night-ingale, Tereus a hoopoe, and Itys a pheasant.

*Itys the bird, on Phaon Sappho calls.* The bird calls Itys, Sappho calls Phaon.

## 40.

In tears, my weary limbs beneath it laid,  
 I saw before me stand  
 A Naiad, and she spake: "Your love ill-paid,  
 " Seek the Ambracian land,

## 41.

"Where Phœbus' fane o'er sea commands the  
 " Leucadia the name. [view;  
 " Pyrrha's Deucalion, diving thence into  
 " The deep, safe cooled his flame.

## 42.

"For love turned round, set Pyrrha's breast  
 " Relieved Deucalion stood. [alight;  
 " This virtue's in the place. Go seek the height,  
 " Nor fear to risk the flood."

## 43.

This said, she disappeared. Fearful advised,  
 My tears abundant flow.  
 O nymph! thy counsel shall not be despised;  
 Mad love no fear can know.

40. *A Naiad.* The Naiads and the Driads were inferior goddesses, the former presiding over brooks and rills, the latter over woods and fields.

*Ambracia.* A country in Epirus.

41. *Leucadia.* An island off the Ambracian coast, remarkable for its white rocks, as the name implies.

*Pyrrha's Deucalion.* Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha performed the principal parts in a great inundation, which is said to have occurred some 800 years after that of Noah; resembling its prototype also in being attributed to the anger of the deity, Jupiter, excited by the wickedness of men. Deucalion, then king of Thessaly, by the advice of his father Prometheus, built a vessel and rode upon the flood nine days, when the waters abated, and set him down on Mount Parnassus. He and his wife Pyrrha consulted the oracle of Themis as to what they should do, and received for answer that they must throw behind them the bones of their mother. They, interpreting this dark saying rightly, took up stones, considering the earth as the common mother of all flesh, and the rocks as her skeleton. These stones they threw behind them, and Deucalion's immediately became men, Pyrrha's women. It appears by the text, that Deucalion had some trouble to gain the love of his Pyrrha; that he even despaired, and took the lover's leap.

42. *He stood relieved.* Instead of loving Pyrrha, Pyrrha loved him; but he was kind, forgot his grievances, and the match was made.

43. *O nymph, thy counsel shall not be despised.* I will risk the plunge.

## 44.

Hap what hap may, mine mends. Blow, breezes,  
 My body's light when thrown. [blow,  
 Love with his pinions aid my fall below,  
 Nor leave me there to drown.

## 45.

Receive my harp, thou god who lent it fire.  
 Inscribed a distich be:  
*Phæbus, accept the dying poet's lyre,*  
*Thou gav'st, she gives it thee.*

## 46.

But Phaon, to Leucadia's shore what call?  
 Come you, sweet bliss will follow.  
 You're more to me than health, Leucadia, all:  
 You're my benign Apollo.

## 47.

Can you, O ruder than the wave or rock,  
 Be said my cause of death?  
 Better while amorous arms each other lock,  
 Than drowning, draw short breath!

## 48.

My verses, Phaon, you were wont to praise,  
 And love their easy flow:  
 Would now they'd verve! but grief all genius  
 And ills lay science low. [stays,

44. *Hap what hap may, mine mends.* My hap, my fortune.  
*Blow breezes, blow.* Let there be wind to float me in the air, and ease  
 my fall.

45. *Thou gav'st, she gives it thee.* Thou, Apollo, gavest me the skill  
 of music; I dedicate my harp to thee.

46. *But Phaon, to Leucadia's shore what call.* Why should I go to  
 the Leucadian rock for my cure.

## 49.

Now my worn strength replies : The harp in pain  
 Is mute. The lyre is still.  
 Ye Lesbian wives ! ye maidens of the main,  
 Whose names our music fill !

## 50.

Ye Lesbian fair ! once loved to my ill name,  
 Cease in my troop to shine.  
 Defunct the lyre that pleased : Phaon 's to blame,  
 Phaon e'en now called mine.

## 51.

Attract him home : your bard to life restore :  
 Tis he who rules her mind.  
 Vain prayer ! he 'll be unmoved, nay hardened  
 My words go to the wind. [more ;

## 52.

Would that which bears them hence might bring  
 you home !  
 Why not ? 'twere too long stay.  
 If, votive gifts prepared, you mean to come,  
 Why torture with delay ?

## 53.

Up sail ; the sea-born Venus gives the wind :  
 You but the anchor raise,  
 And Cupid sitting at the helm you 'll find,  
 To steer the safest ways.

49. *Whose names my music fill.* Lesbos being her home, she must have sung the praises of many of her friends.

50. *Once loved to my ill name.* Her love for certain women of Lesbos had been a scandal to her.

*Defunct the lyre that pleased.* The charms of my lyre are dead.

52. *Would that which bears them hence might bring you home.* Her invocation to the ladies of Lesbos being ended, she now addresses Phaon, wishing that the wind which wafts her letter to him might bring him home.

*If, votive gifts prepared, you mean to come.* If your offerings to the gods for a safe passage are ready, and you really mean to come.

53. *The sea-born Venus.* Venus, the goddess of Beauty and mother of Love, is said to have sprung from the ocean after the body of Uranus

## 54.

But if you wish poor Sappho far away,  
 (Hard to conceive such hate),  
 Send her a cruel line the truth to say,  
 And she 'll fulfil her fate.

had been thrown into it by Saturn. The islands of Cythera and Cyprus both claim the honour of having received her first, hence her names Cypria and Cytherea; be it as it may, she is said to have risen and mounted straight to heaven. Jupiter soon became enamoured of her, but, being refused, he gave her to the most ill-favoured of his sons, Vulcan; hence probably the amorous peccadillos of which the Queen of Love is accused. The first appearance of Venus on the sea is delightfully given by Anacreon in his 51st ode on a discus bearing a representation of the scene. Let it be allowed to give a translation of it:—

Ha! can the master-touch impart  
 To metal life? What freak of art  
 Could dare the semblance here engrave  
 Of ocean's ever moving wave?  
 What Jove-inspired mind so mighty  
 To paint the enchanting Aphrodite,  
 First essence of the gods above?  
 To show unveiled the Queen of Love?  
 The all-forbidden beauties, save  
 Which lie concealed within the wave,  
 Whereon like the light sea-wrack lain,  
 She tranquil rides the liquid plain?  
 See, where her course she deign to guide,  
 Obsequious the waves divide,  
 And leave with an applausive ripple  
 Her snowy neck and rosy nipple.  
 Behold in the blue furrow set  
 A lily chased in violet.  
 On silvery leaping dolphins placed  
 Love and Desire, two wily-faced  
 And sportive gods, are in her suite.  
 Th' encircling choir of fishes fleet  
 Dive wantonly as they espy  
 The sailing Goddess' laughing eye.





## LETTER XVI.

### PARIS TO HELEN.

#### ARGUMENT.

Paris, known also by another name, Alexander (in English Helpman), sailed with a fleet from Troy for Sparta, to achieve possession of the fair Helen, promised him by Venus. He was courteously received on arrival by the husband, Menelaüs, who, however, was soon obliged to set out on a voyage to Crete, concerning the succession of his father, Atreus. During this needful absence, he innocently commends his wife to the care of Paris, and similarly enjoins her to pay great attention to their excellent guest. The lover Paris, deeming this opportunity by no means to be neglected, employs all the arts of seduction to gain the love of Helen, and in this letter signifies the violence of his passion, setting forth in the most vivid light as his own all the parts and qualities for which a lover may be prized, and letting no occasion slip of throwing contempt on Menelaüs. In fine, he persuades an elopement, affirming that on board his fleet she will be safe from pursuit, and that, by the help of the Trojan powers, he is strong to defend her, even in case of a war.

#### 1.

PRIAMIDES sends health to fair Ledæa !

His but from her can flow.

Shall he his feelings tell ? or are they clear ?

And too pellucid show ?

#### 2.

'Twere well my ardent love unseen could bide,

Till fears were put to flight ;

'Tis hard dissembling : who a flame can hide,

Self-evident in light ?

---

1. *Priamides*. Paris, son of Priam.

*Ledæa*. Helen, daughter of Leda. The rhyme of *Ledæa* with *clear* we confess to be illicit, but let it be observed that our Saxon tongue possesses no fit consonance to rhyme with Greek names ending in *ea* and *ia*. So in verse 65 we shall find the word *aspire*, and in the next Letter, verse 62, the word *fire*, used as rhymes to *Hippodamia*.

2. *Till fears were put to flight*. Fears of being discovered by your husband.

## 3.

Nay, an you will the word express the deed,  
 I burn:—Tis even so.  
 Pardon the avowal, nor severe proceed,  
 But mild as beauty's glow.

## 4.

Sweet is the scroll received! to hope we're fain  
 Received we may be too.  
 Decrees we trust, nor aught decreed in vain:  
 Venus' behests we do.

## 5.

Learn, for your weal: this comes from power  
 No minor god my aid. [divine,  
 Great the reward aspired, but rightful mine,  
 By Cytherea paid.

## 6.

Guided by her across intricate seas,  
 From the Sigeon land,  
 We came. The deity forstalled the breeze:  
 Sea-born she may command.

## 7.

Still may she navigate my love the same:  
 Safe landed by her laws.  
 Not here we found but hither brought the flame,  
 Our distant journey's cause.

4. *Sweet is the scroll received.* It is sweet to me that you receive my letter.

*Decrees we trust.* We trust the promise of Venus as a celestial decree.

5. *Cytherea.* A name of Venus, from the island of Cythera, near whose shore some say she first rose from the sea; but that honour is more commonly awarded to Cyprus, whence she is also called Cypria.

6. *From the Sigeon land.* The land of Troy, from Sigæum, a promontory and town near that city.

*Sea-born.* (See the last Letter, note 53.)

7. *Brought the flame,* of my love.

## 8.

Urged by no storm, no fault, no adverse wind,  
Here all our wishes tend.  
Nor deem the voyage of a mercantile kind,  
My own the gods defend !

## 9.

Nor curious to inspect a Grecian town :  
We have richer far at home.  
'Tis you the object, Venus-given, my own,  
For you long-wished I come.

## 10.

Before the eye your vision met the brain,  
Fame gave that face to know.  
Is it strange a long-drawn shaft my breast attain  
From the unerring bow ?

## 11.

Fate so decreed. Listen, ere you oppose,  
To what the truth shall say.  
Before my birth, the term drew near its close,  
Bourn between me and day,

## 12.

My mother dreamed that to her fruitful bed  
A lighted brand she bore.  
Alarmed, arose, and all to Priam said.  
The priests were bid explore.

## 13.

" Ilion," they say, " will burn with Paris' fire !"  
Who burns with fire ? 'tis I.—  
Grown up, a certain grace through mean attire  
Marked latent quality.

---

8. *My own.* My own inheritance.

10. *Your vision.* The idea of your person conceived in my brain.  
*From the unerring bow,* of Cupid.

12. *Explore.* Study the dream, and find its interpretation.

13. *With Paris' fire.* With fire caused by Paris. He uses his name, though speaking of himself unborn,—a figure of speech they call *prolepsis* or anticipation.

## 14.

wind,

There is a wooded vale in middle Ide,  
 Within a gloom like night,  
 Where peaceful sheep nor climbing goat abide,  
 Nor quiet oxen bite.

## 15.

Here, leaning on a maple tree, in view  
 The sea and Troy's proud wall,  
 I hear the noise of steps : list what is true :  
 Incredible withal :

## 16.

ain

Before my sight, and borne on winged feet,  
 Seemed Maiä's son to stand,  
 ('Twas given to see, be it given to repeat,)  
 Caduceus in hand.

## 17.

With him three goddesses compressed the sod :  
 Venus, Minerve, Juno.  
 Trembling my limbs, first spake the winged god :  
 " Courage, why shake ye so ?

## 18.

" You have taste ; these goddesses from doubt  
 " remove,  
 " Which shall take beauty's prize ?"  
 Who can refuse behests envoyed by Jove ?  
 He vanished from my eyes.

16. *Maiä's son.* Mercury. Maiä, daughter of Atlas and Pleione, was mother of Mercury by Jupiter. She is now the brightest of the stars in the constellation called the Pleiades.

*Caduceus in hand.* Mercury wore a winged cap, called his *petasus* ; wings on his heels, called *taloria* ; and bore in his hand a rod entwined with two serpents, which was called his *caduceus* : it had the power of imposing sleep, and even of raising the dead. These were the insignia of his office.

18. *Envoyed by Jove.* The office of Mercury being that of Jupiter's messenger.

## 19.

Now more assured, of fear removed the let,  
 The charms of each we note.  
 Worthy all seemed, but worthiest, with regret,  
 All three I may not quote.

## 20.

Yet one there was in charms excelling more :  
 You guess, the Queen of Love.  
 All ardent vied, and, proffering gifts in store,  
 Each for the verdict strove.

## 21.

Juno with realms, Minerve with valour fee'd,  
 Doubt lies between the two.  
 Sweet Venus smiling said, "Paris, take heed,  
 " Their gifts threat pain to you.

## 22.

"From me have what you'll love, fair Leda's  
 "Fairer the daughter given." [child,  
 She spake, and, fairest of the trio styled,  
 Victrix arose to heaven.

## 23.

Thenceforth my adverse fortune seemed to turn :  
 "The royal youth," they say.  
 A joyful home regales the son's return :  
 Troy notes the festal day.

## 24.

As you by me, sought too was Paris' love :  
 To whom you now are all.  
 Nor princesses alone to win me strove :  
 Wood nymphs my heart would thrall.

22. *Fair Leda's child.* Helen.

23. "*The royal youth,*" *they say.* Shepherd as I was, they now called me the prince. (See Letter V., Argument.)

24. *As you by me, sought too was Paris' love.* As you are sought by me so my love was sought by many.

*Wood nymphs my heart would thrall.* Alluding to CEnone, whose connection he hints at as being slight, but we have seen by her letter (Letter V.) that she thought otherwise.

## 25.

All were despised, O form of beauty bright,  
To you, when hope arose.  
Replete with you by day, still more by night,  
My mind, when eyelids close.

## 26.

Think what 'tis now, when all unseen you please,  
We burned, the flame afar ;  
Nor would delay, but haste to cross the seas  
For you, my ruling star.

## 27.

The Phrygian pines then fall beneath the stroke :  
It ill the grove beseems :  
Stripped are tall Gargara's woods for elm and  
oak :  
Ida yields ample beams.

## 28.

Stout planks are made about the knees to turn,  
The ribs knit to the keel :  
Mast, yard, and sail are rigged, and, on the stern,  
The gods who guard our weal.

## 29.

Her, first, my patroness and her arch son,  
The sponsors of my vow.  
At length a final stroke : the work is done :  
The deep we're fit to plough.

---

26. *Think what 'tis now when all unseen you please.* If you excited love when yet unseen, think what it must be now that I contemplate your beauties.

27. *Gargara, Ida.* Mountains of Troas.

28. *The gods who guard our weal.* The carved representations of the protecting gods.

29. *My patroness and her arch son.* Venus and Cupid.

## 30.

Father and mother both oppose my will,  
 Delay me with their prayers.  
 Cassandra comes in wildest deshabelle,  
 While seaward all prepares :

## 31.

"Whither away?" she cried; "those waters lead  
 "To flame! A brand returns!"  
 The word was true, the fire was found, indeed:  
 In my own breast it burns.

## 32.

We leave, nor lack a wind: soon make the land,  
 Cebalian nymph, called thine.  
 Mine host was kind: here, too, we see the hand  
 Of influence divine.

## 33.

He showed me all that Sparta could contain,  
 Worthy the eye to see.  
 To who the sight of Helen would obtain,  
 All else was nullity.

## 34.

Seeing, we're wonder-struck; my inwards swell  
 With aching sense oppressed.  
 Me such a look,—oh, 'tis remembered well,—  
 Venus on Ide addressed.

30. *Father and mother.* Priam and Hecuba.

*Cassandra.* His sister, a prophetess, deemed half mad.

31. *Those waters lead to flame! A brand returns!* Alluding to the solution of Hecuba's dream. (Letter V., Argument.)

*In my own breast it burns.* Interpreting the dream in his own way.

32. *Cebalian nymph.* Meaning Helen. Cebalia is an ancient name of her country, Sparta, from her own grandfather, Cebalus.

*Mine host.* Helen's husband, Menelaüs.

*Influence divine.* The helping hand of Venus, whom he supposes to have prepossessed Menelaüs in his favour.

34. *Seeing.* Seeing you.

*Venus on Ide addressed.* When in the contest of the three goddesses on Mount Ida she wished to captivate his suffrage.

## 35.

In that sweet contest had but Helen stood,  
 The prize had been in doubt.  
 Rumour upon your charms hath poured a flood  
 Of praise ; no land without.

## 36.

The like will not be found to the earth's end ;  
 No other has a name.  
 Wilt believe ? you're far above all they pretend :  
 Their praise maligns your fame.

## 37.

Far more those charms than hearsay gives to  
 Report outdone by cause. [learn ;  
 Theseus saw all, and reason had to burn :  
 His ardour could not pause.

## 38.

In Spartan games exposed, your beauties bare,  
 A girl 'mong lusty youth,  
 Glorious his act, which all would not repair :  
 Too rich the prize in sooth !

35. *In that sweet contest.* That of the three goddesses already alluded to.

36. *Their praise maligns your fame.* Lessens it by expressing less than is your beauty's due.

37. *Report outdone by cause.* Your fame of beauty surpassed by that beauty which is the cause of your fame.

*Theseus saw all, and reason had to burn.* Theseus saw you, even undressed, as the next verse explains, and could not fail to be captivated.

38. *In Spartan games exposed, your beauties bare,  
 A girl 'mong lusty youth.*

The simplicity of early manners rendered this possible in Greece, and the refined Asiatic seems a good deal struck by it. The Olympian athletic exercises were five in number, hence called *Pentathlon*. They consisted of running, leaping, wrestling, boxing, quoiting. The disputants were naked, their limbs rubbed with oil. Women were not legally admitted; but exceptions occurred, particularly among the Lacedemonians, the most devoted to those sports, and of all Greece the most primitive in their manners.

*Glorious his deed, which all would not repair,  
 Too rich the prize in sooth.*

Theseus carried off Helen, at ten years old, by force, and kept her long concealed; but she was recovered, and brought back pure by her brothers, Castor and Pollux.



## 39.

Rather my soul should from its body part  
 Than Helen from my bed.  
 Thee should these hands allow to leave this heart?  
 Never, till life had fled.

## 40.

Once mine, and Paris' spirit you shall find :  
 My flame ends at the Pyre.  
 Realms offered by a goddess we declined,  
 The spouse of heaven's own sire.

## 41.

To clasp thy neck, and listen to thy voice,  
 We Pallas' guerdon leave.  
 Nor e'er shall seek to 'meliorate our choice :  
 The heart to its own will cleave.

## 42.

Then prithee suffer not our hope to die,  
 O worthy every cost !  
 'Tis no inferior seeks a noble tie :  
 No jot of honour lost.

## 43.

Jove on Electra gat our race you'll find,  
 Not to name those between.  
 My father's laws great part of Asia bind ;  
 His kingdom's end unseen.

39. Between this verse and the next, four lines of Latin are omitted.

40. *Realms offered by a goddess we declined,  
 The spouse of heaven's own sire.*

Juno, the wife of Jupiter, who, in the contest of the three goddesses on Mount Ida, tempted Paris with dominion.

41. *We Pallas' guerdon leave.* I despised also, in the same contest, force offered by Minerva.

*The heart to its own will cleave.* The heart will cleave to that whereon it fixes its affections.

42. *No jot of honour lost.* In a connection with me you in no way lessen your nobility.

43. *Jove on Electra gat our race.* Dardanus, the founder of Troy, was the son of Jupiter by Electra, one of the seven daughters by Atlas

## 44.

Cities unnumbered, fraught with splendid halls,  
 Temples that awe inspire :  
 Iliou you 'll see with her stupendous walls  
 Raised by Apollo's lyre.

## 45.

Innumeros throng of men there circulate,  
 The lands suffice with pain.  
 The crowd of dames come to felicitate  
 Our rooms will scarce contain.

## 46.

Often, "How poor is Sparta!" will you say,  
 "Each house a city's wealth!"  
 Not that one ought Achaia to gainsay,  
 To me, 'tis wealth and health.

## 47.

But Sparta's frugal: ah! its style of dress  
 Ill fits your beauty's glow.  
 Endless attire demands such loveliness,  
 In new device to show.

## 48.

Seeing our men thus tastefully arrayed,  
 Judge of the dames of Troy.  
 Oh, be you one: let not the Spartan maid  
 Deny the Phrygian's joy.

---

and Pleias, hence called Pleiades, and now forming the constellation of seven stars bearing that name. From Dardanus descended Troas, Ilus, Laomedon, Priam, Paris.

*My father's laws.* Here begins the lover's boast.

44. *Iliou.* We see that the three higher ancestors have transmitted their names either to the country or the town: Dardania, Troja, Iliou.

*Raised by Apollo's lyre.* The city of Troy, being renowned for arts and navigation. Neptune and Apollo were assumed as its founders, and Apollo is said to have moved the stones by the harmony of his lyre.

46. *Each house a city's wealth.* One house in Troy is as rich as the whole town of Lacedæmon.

*Achaia.* Greece.

47. *Endless attire demands such loveliness.* Such loveliness requires endless variety of dress.

48. *Let not the Spartan maid.* Helen.

*Deny the Phrygian's.* Paris's.

## 49.

From Phrygian root his pedigree is drawn  
 Who pours the ambrosial wine.  
 Phrygian Aurora's theft at early dawn  
 When night-rays feebly shine.

## 50.

Phrygian Anchises, with the Queen of Love,  
 Met in the Idæan shade :  
 With me if Menelas for figure strove,  
 My conquest cheap were made.

## 51.

From me no stepfather to fright the sun,  
 And turn his team aside.  
 No Priam's sire a bloody deed hath done,  
 Nor stained the Myrtoum tide.

49.

*From Phrygian root his pedigree is drawn  
 Who pours the ambrosial wine.*

The cupbearer of the gods was Hebe, the Goddess of Youth, daughter of Juno and Jupiter, but she was superseded in her office by Gany-mede, son of Tros king of Troy, who, on account of his beauty, was carried up to Heaven for that purpose by Jupiter's eagle.

*Phrygian Aurora's theft.* Aurora's first amorous larcin was Tithonus, the son of Laomedon, and brother of Priam, whose beauty so tempted the rosy-fingered deity, that she carried him off one day before sunrise, and married him. Through Aurora's interest Tithonus obtained immortality; but he had forgotten to demand perpetual youth, so that his old age caused Aurora to give him a successor in Cephalus, as we have seen in the last Letter, verse 21.

*Night-rays.* The moon and stars.

50. *Phrygian Anchises.* Anchises was the son of Capys, and beloved by the goddess Venus, by whom he became father of Æneas, illustrious in the Trojan war, and hero of Virgil's great poem, the Æneid.

51. *From me no stepfather to fright the sun.* Having shown his own pretensions in glowing light, he now begins to depreciate Menelaüs, and develop the tragedies of his family, which are no trifle. Helen's stepfather alluded to is Atreus king of Argos, not naturally bad, but led to frightful revenge by the offence of his brother Thyestes, who seduced his queen, and had three children by her. Atreus banished his brother from his court; but, unsatisfied for the injury received, he sent for him back, caused the three children to be killed, and, at a great repast to which Thyestes was invited, had them served up before him, and he partook of the dish, after which the heads and limbs of the children were shown to the father, who fled immediately to Sicyon.

*No Priam's sire a bloody deed hath done.* He would imply that Pelops, the grandfather of Menelaüs, murdered Ænomaus, king of Pisa, whose daughter Hippodamia he won, as we have seen (Letter VIII., verse 18), in a chariot race, and married.

*Nor stained the Myrtoum tide.* The Myrtoum sea is a part of the Ægean, between Eubœa and Attica. Paris insinuates here, too, against Pelops, that he killed Myrtilus, his opponent's chariotcer, and threw him into the Myrtoum sea, notwithstanding that the man, in losing the race, had acted dishonestly for his advantage.

## 52.

None in the vale of Styx fair fruit will catch,  
 Nor thirst amid the lake.  
 But what of this? you with their scion match,  
 And Jove their cousin make!

## 53.

For shame! all night his dull caresses paid  
 With amorous embrace!  
 To me scarce visible till cloth is laid,  
 From my insipid place.

## 54.

At banquet set oft feeling just such spite  
 As at an enemy's feast,  
 Hating the giver, fondling, in one's sight,  
 His arm about your waist.

## 55.

Oh madness! yet what profit all this told?  
 That wrapp'd in bliss he lies?  
 You kiss before my face, nay, kind. I hold  
 My cup before my eyes,

## 56.

And turn away in jealous spite the while;  
 The food impedes my throat;  
 And deeply sigh. You with a wanton smile  
 The torment seem to note.

52. *None in the vale of Styx fair fruit will catch,  
 Nor thirst amid the lake.*

Alluding to Tantalus king of Lydia, who was the root of that family, which, as we see in Letter VIII., their scion, Hermione, terms Tantalian. Tantalus in hell was condemned to be immersed to the chin in water, continually thirsting, and unable to drink, the liquid ever escaping. Also to have fine fruit within his reach, but retiring if he attempted to touch it.

*You with their scion match,  
 And Jove their cousin make.*

You, the daughter of Jupiter, marry Menelaüs their son, and thus ally a family so full of horrors to the King of Heaven himself.

53. *To me scarce visible.* You are scarcely visible to me.

54. *Hating the giver.* Menelaüs.

## 57.

Quenching my flame with wine, it burnt the more,  
As fire to fire it grew.  
Much to avoid, we ruminate the floor,  
But quick revert to you.

## 58.

What remedy? To see? it racks my soul.  
Not see? still more my woe.  
Well as may be dissimulate my dole?  
But love through all will show.

## 59.

No painting this: you feel, you feel it all;  
Would no one saw but you!  
How oft I turn to hide the tears that fall,  
Lest he should see them too.

## 60.

Often o'er wine recount some lover's fate,  
Each word to you applied:  
My own distress in fable figurate:  
My own the love so tried.

## 61.

Oft, when a wanton thought might be expressed,  
Ebriety I feign.  
One day your tunic, open at the breast,  
Exposed love's rich domain.

## 62.

Whiter than driven snow, whiter than Jove,  
When Leda's breath he sipped.  
As stupified, my mind with feelings strove:  
The cup my fingers slipped.

---

57. *Quenching my flame with wine.* Drinking to forget his love.

59. *Lest he.* Menelaüs.

60. *My own the love so tried.* As represented in the story just told.

62. *Whiter than Jove.* Under the form of a swan, when he caressed Leda.

## 63.

You kiss Hermione: I seize the child:  
 Crop from her lip the kiss,  
 Then leaning backward hum a wood-note wild,  
 Or wink, "Don't tell of this."

## 64.

First Clymene and Æthra of your train  
 Precautiously I sound.  
 They, little favouring, say my suit is vain,  
 And leave me as they found.

## 65.

Would heaven to you, as prize of exploit done,  
 The victor might aspire!  
 Hippomenes thus Atalanta won,  
 Pelops Hippodamia.

## 66.

Severed Alcides Acheloüs' horn  
 For Dejanire's embrace:  
 So Paris would all dangers laugh to scorn,  
 Helen the sweet solace.

63. *Hermione*. The daughter of Helen and Menelaüs, then a child, afterwards married to Orestes. We have seen her letter to her lover (Letter VIII.)

64. *Clymene and Æthra*. Two of Helen's women.

65. *Hippomenes thus Atalanta won*. Atalanta, the daughter of Schoeneus king of Scyros, attracted numerous admirers, but was too sincerely devoted to the worship of Diana to contract a marriage tie. In order to get rid of her lovers she proposed a race, on condition that whoever could win her should wed her. But the huntress was invincibly swift of foot, and, giving them the start, she bore a javelin to pierce her competitor if she should overtake him. Many perished. At length Hippomenes, the son of Megareus, became a candidate, and won by the help of Venus, who furnished him with three apples from the garden of the Hesperides. These one by one he threw on the ground; their beauty tempted the fair runner, she stopped to pick them up, and, thus losing time, lost the race. But she lost her heart too, so far as to grant favours to her lover even in the temple of Cybele, where they were married; to punish which the goddess turned them both into lions.

*Pelops Hippodamia*. We have seen, Letter VIII., verse 18, that Pelops won Hippodamia in a chariot race.

On the rhyme *aspire*—*Hippodamia*, see note 1.

66. *Severed Alcides Acheloüs' horn*. Hercules broke the horn of Acheloüs. (See note, Letter IX., verse 35.)

## 67.

None now remain to hear my moan but you :  
 Deign to your feet I move.  
 O present boast of Leda's glorious two !  
 O daughter worthy Jove !

## 68.

Either with you in Trojan port my bride,  
 Or exile here inhumed.  
 No playful missile on my breast is tried :  
 This heart is love-consumed.

## 69.

Cassandra's bode was true ; 'twas heaven's dictate,  
 Shot with celestial fire.  
 Spare, Helen, to refuse what's given by fate :  
 So may the gods inspire !

## 70.

Yet much remains to say, but to your ear,  
 When closeted at eve.  
 You honour married Venus, and yet fear  
 A husband to deceive !

## 71.

Too simple Helen, not to say, you fool !  
 Such beauty live sans blame !  
 Or change the face or break through virtue's rule :  
 Beauty's at war with shame.

67. *O present boast of Leda's glorious two.* O you who are the glory of your two twin brothers, Castor and Pollux, sons of Leda.

68. *No playful missile upon my breast is tried :*

*This heart is love-consumed.*

This is no pleasantry of Cupid ; my breast is wounded not only with his dart but with his flame also.

69. *Cassandra's bode.* See verse 31.

*So may the gods inspire.* That you may not refuse.

## 72.

These thefts please Jove, nor Cytherea pain :  
 Him for your sire procure.  
 If there be force in seed you 'll not remain  
 Leda's and Jove's and pure.

## 73.

Yet pure you shall be, once made mine in Troy,  
 Me the sole cause of fault.  
 What Hymen will sacrate, yours now the joy,  
 Or Venus' powers but halt.

## 74.

The husband urges, not by word but deed,  
 He quits, hap what hap can.  
 To see his realm could no time serve his need  
 But this ? O wondrous man !

## 75.

Parting he said, " To you, Nelly, the care  
 " Of our Idæan guest."  
 We testify, you slur his parting prayer  
 Nor tend to his behest.

## 76.

Think you, Ledæa, this man ever could  
 Enough your beauty prize ?  
 You are wrong. Did he appreciate his good  
 He'd doubt all foreign eyes.

72. *These thefts please Jove.* Since his story is full of amorous intrigue.

*Nor Cytherea pain.* Nor give pain to Venus, but, on the contrary, make her delight.

*Him for your sire procure.* When he assumed the disguise of the swan.

73. *What Hymen will sacrate.* When we shall be arrived in Troy.  
*Or Venus' powers but halt.* For she will then stand obviously incapable of fulfilling her promise.

74. *The husband urges.* Your husband, throwing occasion in our way, excites us to love.

*To see his realm.* His late inheritance from his father Atreus ; object of his voyage.

75. *Idæan.* Trojan, from Mount Ida.

76. *Ledæa.* Daughter of Leda, Helen.

*This man.* Menelaüs.



## 77.

Since nor for words nor for my love you care,  
 His means at least we'll try.  
 Or greater fool than even he we were,  
 Letting rich time go by.

## 78.

Himself just brings the lover to his nest :  
 E'en let the good man do.  
 Long nights alone a widowed couch you've  
 A widower Paris too. [pressed :

## 79.

Once you with me connubial wishes crown,  
 The night outshines the day !  
 Then I'll invoke your gods, and bind me down  
 With vows yourself shall say.

## 80.

And then, or else my judgment steers far wrong,  
 You'll willing seek my home.  
 If shame or fear that you to us belong,  
 On me the censure come.

## 81.

Theseus my model, and your brothers twin :  
 Could you be hit more nigh ?  
 The first lifts you : Leucippus' nymphs they win :  
 The fourth in rank am I.

77. *His means.* Those which he gives me by quitting his home.  
*We were.* I should be.

78. *Let the good man do* as he is doing. In French, "*Laissez faire le bon homme.*" We should rather say, in English, "*Let him alone.*"

79. *The night outshines.* Will then outshine.

81. *Theseus my model, and your brothers twin, &c.* Theseus carrying off Helen has been noticed, verse 37. Her brothers, Castor and Pollux, ran away with Phoebe and Elaira, the daughters of Leucippus prince of Sparta.

*Lifts you.* Carries off, runs away with.

## 82.

My Trojan fleet is here both armed and manned,  
 Our keels make rapid way.  
 A queen upon the Trojan shore you stand ;  
 The crowd a goddess say.

## 83.

Celestial odours on your path exhale ;  
 The fatted victims fall.  
 Nor father's, mother's, brethren's offering fail,  
 Nor from Troy's gentry all.

## 84.

Alas ! of lowly homage to your charms,  
 This a small part to say.  
 Nor dread your flight for recourse had to arms  
 By Greece in full array.

## 85.

How many rapt ! How few by arms are sought !  
 The dread is mere grimace.  
 Aquilo's Thracians, with Erechthis fraught,  
 Begat no harm to Thrace.

## 86.

With Jason erst Medea went astray,  
 And hence no wars arise.  
 Your Theseus Ariadne bore away :  
 Minos but shut his eyes.

83. *Celestial odours on your path exhale.* The people will offer incense to you, and adore you as a goddess.

85. *Aquilo's Thracians with Erechthis fraught.* Erechthis is the patronymic of Orithya, daughter of Erechtheus king of Athens. Not accepting the offer of Aquilo, or Boreas, god of the north wind and then king of Thrace, he caused her to be carried away in a gust of violence by his Thracians.

86. *With Jason erst Medea went astray.* We have seen in Letter VI. from Hypsipyle, and Letter XII. from Medea, the love adventures of Jason.

87.

All in these thing less hurt than frightened are ;  
'Twere shame too much to dread.  
Yet, if it please, suppose the menaced war :  
We 've strength to make a head.

88.

Asia hath means to match the Argive land,  
Rich both in foot and horse.  
Nor Menelas with greater heart would stand  
Than Paris, nor more force.

89.

A lad with men I fought to fend the flock :  
Thence Alexand' my name :  
In wrestling, when a lad, my nerves would lock :  
Ilioneus loved the game.

90.

Nor deem me void of danger but when nigh :  
My bow sends true its smart.  
Think you Atrides in these sports might vie,  
Strong in the gymnic art ?

91.

Give him his due : a brother Hector mine :  
He 's one without compare.  
Me you know not, my strength has hidden lien,  
Nor guess with whom you pair.

---

89. *Alexander*. This second name of Paris, as we have seen in the Argument, signifies *help-man* ; the present verse shows the cause of his having such addition.

*Ilioneus*. One of the Trojan heroes, son of Phorbas, the eldest of the children of Priam. He survived the war, and followed Æneas to Italy.

90. *My bow sends true its smart*. Paris was a first-rate archer, and in the tenth year of the war, after the death of Hector, brought down the great Achilles by a wound in the heel, the only vulnerable part of that hero's body.

## 92.

Either then no recourse is had to war,  
Or the Greek forces yield.  
In truth for such a prize men would go far :  
Great stakes are on the field.

## 93.

Were in our quarrel the whole world at odds,  
Eternal fame to you.  
Once this place left under propitious gods,  
Boldly demand your due.

---

93. *Boldly demand your due.* All the gifts and honours that he has promised from verse 44 to 49.



## LETTER XVII.

### HELEN TO PARIS.

---

#### ARGUMENT.

Helen, having read Paris' letter, is at first offended, and expresses her anger : then, moderating, she begins to reason with him, and, defending her honour, combats his persuasions with arguments and much raillery, yet in such a manner as not to seem entirely to neglect his suit. At length, having completed her reasoning against his pretensions, she confesses her own feelings in his favour, and allows him to continue his attentions, provided his love be real, of which she expresses some doubt. She advises, however, in order to carry on their amour with safety, not to write but to communicate by means of her two attendants and faithful friends, Æthra and Clymene. All this was duly performed, and, their plan being settled, they departed together for Troy.

---

#### 1.

SINCE your audacious writing met our view,  
Silence ill fits our fame.  
A stranger dares with boisterous heat pursue  
A lawful spouse to shame !

#### 2.

Was it for this, when to our haven come,  
Your landing none opposed ?  
For this, to afford a generous house and home,  
Our palace gates unclosed ?

#### 3.

That wrong our hospitality should fee ?  
A welcomed guest turn foe ?  
These lines, no doubt, all truthful as they be,  
With you for rustic go.

---

3. *With you for rustic go.* Alluding to the expression of Paris in verse 71 of his letter, "Too simple Helen, &c."

## 4.

Rustic an 't please, so to an honest part  
 No soilure intervene.  
 What though sincerity with joy of heart  
 Display no tristful mien,

## 5.

Our honour's pure and cheerful as we play,  
 Makes no seducer's fame.  
 More admirable you, to dare assay :  
 What showed so sure a game ?

## 6.

Was 't, for that Neptune's hero took me off,  
 Once rapt should be again ?  
 Seduced we rightly had become a scoff ;  
 Forced, we could bear no stain.

## 7.

And what advantage gained he over me,  
 For tremor who stood quit ?  
 Some kisses haply plundered boisterously :  
 No boons that ill befit.

## 8.

Your freedom had not paused with the assault ?  
 He was not you, thank god !  
 Restored intact, pudour redeemed the fault :  
 In honour's path he trod.

4.

*Rustic an't please, so to an honest part  
 No soilure intervene.*

So long as, not abandoning virtue, the course of my life continue to be without stain.

6. *Neptune's hero.* Theseus, whom the poets sometimes make the son or descendant of Neptune, probably from his father's name, Ægeus, being also a surname of the ocean king.

8. *Had not paused.* Would not have stopped. She alludes to his letter where four lines are omitted after verse 39.

## 9.

Did Theseus stop that Paris might achieve,  
 Lest fame intact remain?  
 This chafes me not, for love none misconceive;  
 But do you love, or feign?

## 10.

That is the question: not for we lack faith,  
 Or of our value doubt,  
 But that to girls credulity is scathe,  
 And truth you are said without.

## 11.

"How few are chaste! A matron rarely quite!"  
 Why not I one so rare?  
 And why, when mother you calumnious cite,  
 Must Helen stigma bear.

## 12.

Quoting my mother's fault, an error lies,  
 As visually deceived.  
 The sin by me were done with open eyes,  
 My ruin self-achieved.

## 13.

Hers by the immortal doer stood excused;  
 My Jupiter were shame.  
 As to your far-fetched lineage perused,  
 We are great in our own name.

9. *Lest fame.* My fame, my reputation.

10. *Not for we lack faith.* I ask the question, not that I am predisposed to disbelieve, nor that I doubt my own merit.

11. *How few are chaste: a matron rarely.* Alluding to his *Letter*, verse 70.

*And why, when mother you calumnious cite.* In answer to his verse 72:

"You cannot remain  
 "Leda's and Jove's, and pure."

12. *As visually deceived.* Jupiter being hid under the form of a swan.

13. *Hers by the immortal doer stood excused.* My mother's fault stood excused by the majesty of the immortal who made her commit it.  
*My Jupiter.* My lover, Paris, would bring shame on me.

## 14.

For, waiving husband's, father's pedigree,  
 Tindarus', Pelops', worth,  
 Fair Leda from the swan ennobles me,  
 Primal of Jove brought forth.

## 15.

Go, then, enlarge upon your Phrygian rise ;  
 Priam, Laomedon :  
 All reverend, but he of greater price,  
 Your fifth, is Helen's *one*.

## 16.

What though Troy's sceptre forcible you deem ?  
 Our strength can be no less :  
 And, richer though in gold and men you seem,  
 You are barbarous, I guess.

## 17.

So great in promises your letter sounds,  
 A goddess 't would entice.  
 Yea, but, were one disposed to step o'er bounds,  
 Yourself were higher price.

## 18.

Were 't not perpetual fame to keep intact,  
 You, more than gifts, were fear :  
 Nor odious they, but far more would enact  
 The man who makes them dear.

*All everend.* All respectable.

*Your fifth is Helen's one.* Dardanus, the root of the Trojan royal family, was the son of Jupiter by Electra. See the line of genealogy in the last Letter, verse 43, note, where it appears that Priam is the fifth from Jupiter. "But," she continues, "your fifth in ancestry, your Jupiter, is number one in mine; he is my very father."

16. *You are barbarous, I guess.* Both Greece and Rome used the word barbarous to express a foreigner.

17. *Higher price.* A greater attraction.

18. *You, more than gifts, were fear.* Your person, more than your gifts, would be a cause of fear. Here ends her raillery, which now turns to confession.



## 19.

Far more than gifts your passion flatters me,  
Your hope-led weary way :  
At table all your impudence we see,  
Disguise it as we may.

## 20.

Now, motionless, on me your saucy eye :  
Mine fascinated sink.  
Now greedily you seize my cup and sigh,  
And where we sipped you drink.

## 21.

Off from the finger, or the speaking brow,  
Your telegraph is read,  
Of amorous hint : I, trembling, lest e'en now  
My husband turn his head,

## 22.

Have murmured : " This bold fellow hath no  
shame : "  
And words of truth they prove.  
Writ on the board in wine appears my name,  
And underneath, " I LOVE ! "

## 23.

The script is answered by a shake : " No, NO ! "  
Alas ! we learn your style.  
And here a fall, had evil been to do,  
To some such flattering wile.

## 24.

'Tis true your form is rare, and many a maid  
Would fly to your embrace.  
Sooner another a chaste wife be made  
Than Helen see disgrace.

---

23. *By a shake.* Of the head, in sign of negation.

*Your style.* Of speaking by signs.

*And here a fall, had evil been to do.* And to such seductive wiles I should have fallen had my propensities been vicious.

25.

Learn, then, of me, nor beauty make your aim :  
 Illicit good despise.  
 Who knows how many have admired the same ?  
 Not you alone have eyes.

26.

'Tis not that more you see, but more you dare :  
 More heart ? no : but more face.  
 Had fate but will'd your vessel hither bear,  
 When crowds sought my embrace,

27.

Seen in the thousand, you had been the one ;  
 My lord would say no less.  
 'Tis now too late ; long since the prize is won,  
 And other arms possess.

28.

Though well disposed the Trojan bride to act,  
 From Menelaüs free,  
 Yet pri'thee do not my poor brain distract  
 With importunity.

29.

Suffer we keep the lot to us allied,  
 Nor my poor spoil contest.  
 But Venus gave, when to your view on Ide  
 Three goddesses undressed !

30.

One offering rule, another martial force,  
 A third Atrides' wife.  
 Hard belief, that gods to Paris have recourse  
 To litigate such strife !

26. *Had fate but will'd.* If fate had but been willing.

27. *The one.* The one of my choice.

*My lord.* My husband, Menelaüs.

28. *The Trojan bride to act.* To follow you, and become a Trojan matron.

29. *Three goddesses undressed.* Referring to his Letter, verse 17. . .

## 31.

And though 't were fact, sure in the rest you  
dream,

That Helen be the prize:  
Nor can our self-love credit first to seem  
In the fair goddess' eyes.

## 32.

Enough, my form approved to mortal view.  
Fair Venus we mistrust;  
Yet nought repugning. Welcome her praise, too:  
Why question,—Is it just?

## 33.

Chafe not that belief with me is hardly seized:  
Great things we doubt for true.  
My first delight is Venus to have pleased,  
My next, to have tempted you.

## 34.

Nor Pallas' wit nor Juno's realms delight,  
Helen's attractions by!  
Helen outweighs wealth, wisdom, power, and  
might!  
Could heart of steel deny?

## 35.

We are not hardhearted, only loth to love,  
Unable to confide.  
Who, wise, would seek an arid soil to move,  
Where harvest is denied?

31. *In the fair goddess' eyes.* In the eyes of Venus, who is beauty itself.

32. *Welcome her praise.* Her praise is welcome.

34. *Nor Pallas' wit.* Neither science and wisdom which Pallas offered you—*nor Juno's realms*, nor the dominion offered by Juno—*delight in presence of Helen*, the gift of Venus.

35. *Who, wise?* Who, if he were wise?

## 36.

In Venus' larcin rude, the gods so speed,  
 No art yet tried on men :  
 The silent characters which here you read  
 Are primals of my pen.

## 37.

Tried hands work safe ; most inexperienced I.  
 The way to sin is hard.  
 Shame is an ill, and felt when every eye  
 Seems to direct usward.

## 38.

'Tis no vain fear : there are who scandal list :  
 Æthra hears all they tell.  
 Be cautious, then, unless you will desist ;  
 Yet why ? who feign so well.

## 39.

Play circumspect ; freer not wholly freed,  
 Atrides being away.  
 His absence is for cause of urgent need :  
 The voyage bare no delay.

## 40.

So seemed at least, and, when about to go,  
 Me saying : " Soon home you 'd best :"  
 He kissed, and answered : " Mind the house ; also  
 " Look to our Trojan guest."

36. *In Venus larcin rude.* Being very unskilful in the artifices of coquetry to gain a man's love.

*The gods so speed.* So may the gods be good to me as I speak true.

*The silent characters which here you read*

*Are primals of my pen.*

The words on this paper are the first I ever wrote on such a subject.

37. *Æthra.* Her attendant.

*Yet why? who feign so well.* Why should you who know so well how to feign desist from the love which you can so easily conceal?

39. *His absence is for cause.* The succession of his father, Atræus.

40. *So seemed.* So it seemed to me.

*"Soon home you had best."* You had better come back quickly: innocent pleasantries between wife and husband.

## 41.

To hide a laugh my lips compressive strain,  
And briefly say, "I will."  
In fine, for Crete they navigate the main.  
Make it no cause of ill.

## 42.

Absent my lord, but absent still to guard:  
Long is the regal arm.  
Fame, too, is charge: the more with praise you  
More founded his alarm. [fard,

## 43.

My glory, as things are, is now my bane:  
Better that fame unjust.  
Nor wonder at his leaving without pain;  
In my fair name he has trust.

## 44.

Beauty breeds doubt, morals security:  
One faith inspires, one fear.  
You would exploit the opportunity  
He kindly gives you here.

## 45.

We would an' if we durst: there lies the strife;  
Doubt harasses my heart:  
The husband gone, you leading single life,  
Pleasing on either part.

## 46.

Conversing oft and lonely the long night:  
Both fair and both too near.  
Moody if to the crime all not invite,  
What hinders but the fear?

---

42. *Long is the regal arm.* A king's vengeance extends far.  
*Fame, too, is charge.* Reputation is a charge, since it requires pains to maintain it.

## 47.

The ill you teach, 'twere well that strength assure :  
 Forced my rusticity.  
 A wrong is good at times to who endure :  
 Mine be such injury.

## 48.

Or rather while 'tis new our love oppose :  
 Wet a new flame, 'tis done.  
 Unstable faith 'mong guests : like them love goes ;  
 You think it safe — 'tis gone.

## 49.

Ariadne and Hypsipyle, to wit,  
 Sighed in deserted bed.  
 CEnone, traitor, long your firmly-knit,  
 You leave unhusbanded.

## 50.

Deny not : things to you that appertain  
 We know in full detail.  
 Add more : you cannot, if you would, remain ;  
 Your Trojans rig their sail.

## 51.

While this with hope you read, the evils brew,  
 The anchor up you 'll find.  
 Joys in mid progress left, as rich as new,  
 Our loves go to the wind.

47. *'Twere well that strength assure.* She hints that a violent act on his part, as carrying her off by force, would remove from her mind the difficulty of a consent.

*Forced my rusticity.* Alluding again, as in the 3rd verse, to his expression in his 71st, "Too simple Helen."

48. *Or rather while 'tis new.* A feint of returning to virtuous resolutions, yet not from fear of sin, but from doubt of his constancy.

49. *Ariadne and Hypsipyle.* We have seen, Letter VI., the complaints of the latter against Jason, and in Letter X. those of the former against Theseus.

*CEnone, traitor.* We have also seen, in Letter V., CEnone abandoned by Paris.

50. *Your Trojans rig their sail.* Your men are resolved to depart.

52.

Or say we join, and visit lofty Troy,  
 Grandsire Laomedon :  
 Beware of scandal the acute annoy,  
 My shame commented on !

53.

What buzzing in Achaia brought to life !  
 In your own Troy what din !  
 What will old Priam say, and his good wife ?  
 Your brethren ? all your kin ?

54.

Ev'n your own faith in me will die away,  
 Experienced untrue.  
 Whatever stranger enters Ilian bay  
 Brings jealousy to you.

55.

How oft in anger will you dub me " Stale ?"  
 Forget the fault your own ?  
 Author and censor : rather Tellus veil  
 My beauties under stone !

56.

But we 'll have Trojan wealth, immortal cult,  
 The promised gifts and more :  
 Purple and sparkling gems the rich result  
 And gold in endless store.

57.

Pardon the freedom : gifts we value light.  
 Sparta my home is made.  
 If wronged in Phrygia who shall do me right ?  
 What parent's brothers', aid ?

52. *Or say we join.* Suppose that I join the ship after the anchor is up, and that we visit Troy together.

53. *In Achaia.* In Greece, my country.

55. *Forget the fault your own.* Forgetting that yourself was the cause of leading me to ill.

*Tellus.* The Earth, the most ancient of the gods after Chaos.

56. *But we 'll have Trojan wealth.* Alluding to his Letter, verse 46 to 48, where he displays the splendour that awaits her at Troy.

57. *What parent's, brothers', aid ?* The parent alluded to is Tyndarus ; the brothers, Castor and Pollux.

58.

Medea, Jason promised all ; was she  
 The less by him exiled ?  
 Neither Ipsea nor Chalciopè  
 Would harbour her reviled.

59.

No such my fear nor anxious was Medee,  
 Yet her fair hope declined.  
 All ships to perish tempest-tossed at sea  
 Leave port with favouring wind.

60.

Your mother's dream is fear, the burning brand  
 Preauguring your birth.  
 The trist solution: " Fire from Grecian strand  
 " Burns Ilion to the earth !"

61.

Just as we hope in Cytherea who  
 A double trophy bore,  
 So if your boast be troth, awful the two  
 Who for their check are sore.

62.

No question but a flight will move to arm :  
 Love will bring sword and fire.  
 The Hæmonians wrought the Centaurs bloody  
 For wronged Hippodamia. [harm

58. *Medea, Jason promised all.* Jason promised Medea everything a lover could promise.

*Ipsea*, Medea's mother. *Chalciopè*, her sister. See Letter XII., Medea to Jason.

60. *Your mother's dream.* Referring to his Letter, verse 12.

61. *Cytherea who a double trophy bore.* Double because Venus won the prize of beauty against two competitors, Juno and Minerva, of whom she expresses her fear at the end of the verse, " Awful the two who for their check are sore."

62. *The Hæmonians wrought the centaurs bloody harm.* The Hæmonians are Thessalians, and thus named from Mount Hæmus. Helen combats Paris' assertion in his 85th verse, that affairs of this kind are generally hushed up, by instancing the battle of the Lapythæ, a Thessalianor Hæmonian party, against the Centaurs at the marriage of Hippodamia. See Letter II., verse 18.

See note 1, Letter XVI. concerning rhymes such as *fire*, *Hippodamia*.



## 63.

Atrides deem you to just vengeance slow ?  
And my twin brothers too ?  
You largely boast ; with martial fury glow ;  
Great talkers little do.

## 64.

You are Venus' boy, not Mars'. The strong let  
Paris shall only love. [fight,  
Let Hector whom you vaunt defend the right,  
You softer combats move.

## 65.

And us they move, if we but dared to try ;  
Girls will do if they may.  
Yes, we perhaps will do, pudour laid by,  
And conquered yield some day.

## 66.

A colloquy you ask — our private verb :  
We know whereto you would.  
'Tis going too fast. Your grain is yet in herb.  
Delay for your own good.

## 67.

So far the secrets of my heart expressed,  
My lengthy letter ends.  
From Clymene and Æthra learn the rest ;  
Companions both and friends.

---

63. *Atrides*. Her husband Menelaüs, son of Atreus.  
*Twin-brothers*. Castor and Pollux.

64. *Let Hector whom you vaunt*. At the conclusion of his Letter.

66. *Our private verb*. A private interview.

## LETTER XVIII.

### LEANDER TO HERO.

---

#### ARGUMENT.

The Hellespont, or strait leading from the *Ægean Sea* to the *Propontis*, now called the *Sea of Marmara*, is about a mile across. It has on the European side the town of *Sestos*, where *Hero* lived; and on the Asian side that of *Abydos*, where dwelt the family of *Leander*. He, desperately in love with the *Maid of Sestos*, used to swim over the water at night to her embrace; but, the sea being rendered impracticable by stormy weather, seven days had passed without his being able to enjoy a sight of his mistress, and he despatches this letter by a hardy mariner who ventures on the trip in spite of the weather. The writer first develops his love, showing it to be most ardent and constant; then complains bitterly that, by the tempest, he is denied to pass the sea. He engages, in fine, to do so shortly, be the weather as it may, and, in spite of the waters' rage to dare their danger rather than want the sight and converse of all he holds dear.

---

#### 1.

THE Abydenian sends—what more 'twould please  
From his own lips to give—  
Health to the Maid of Sestos! But the seas  
Will let no swimmer live.

#### 2.

Are to my love the heavenly powers benign,  
These words you 'd fain not read.  
But hostile are the gods who here confine,  
Nor onward let me speed.

---

1. The first four lines render two of the Latin.

*The Abydenian.* Leander of Abydos.

*The Maid of Sestos.* Hero.

2. *Are to my love the heavenly powers benign.* If the heavenly powers are favourable to my love.

## 3.

Behold the murky sky, the swelling sea :  
Ships dare not hold their way.  
One hardy pilot takes this scroll for thee,  
And ventures from the bay.

## 4.

Myself had gone, but, crowded as the shore,  
While they the halser slid,  
No way to shun my parents as before :  
Our love had not lien hid.

## 5.

My mind while writing muses : " Happy scroll !  
" Beneath her finger tip :  
" Her ivory teeth will break the wax to unroll :  
" You 'll touch her coral lip."

## 6.

Some such like words escape as we indite,  
The rest on paper see.  
More gaily would this hand exert its might  
Across the well-known sea.

## 7.

More apt indeed at cutting o'er the stream,  
Yet it tells well my mind.  
Seven tedious nights, to me a year they seem,  
The waves war with the wind.

## 8.

Let slumber in the night enwrap my sense,  
My dream is tempest-toss'd.  
Watch on Abydos' rock, my mind intense  
Embraces Sestos coast.

---

4. *Our love had not lien hid.* The family of the youth is much richer than that of the maiden, hence the need of secrecy.

7. *Yet it tells well my mind.* With the pen in writing.

8. *Watch on Abydos' rock.* If I watch.

## 9.

The lantern to your beacon tower allied  
 I see or seem to see.  
 Thrice on the beach my raiment laid aside :  
 I tried the rolling sea.

## 10.

The mountain billow set my will at nought,  
 Merged in its trough I lay.  
 But you, of winds the rudest ever thought,  
 Boreas, why spite me ? say.

## 11.

Cruel, with me not with the waves you vie.  
 What ? had you never loved.  
 Cold as be Boreas, yet he 'll not deny  
 Actæan flame he proved.

## 12.

Him joyward bound, suppose some power to  
 And hold ; how he 'd contend ! [seize,  
 Then, Boreas, spare and move a milder breeze :  
 So Eolus be your friend.

## 13.

Vain proffered prayer ! so loth the flood to allay,  
 With rabid verve he sings.  
 Ah, Dedalus, though near thy fatal bay,  
 Couldst lend me but thy wings !

9. *The lantern to your beacon tower allied.* Hero set up every night, a lamp at her window as a signal that she was there, and ready to receive her lover.

10. *Boreas.* The north wind, the rudest of all from its cold in winter

11. *What ?* What would you have done ?

*Actæan flame he prov'd.* Boreas, also called Aquilo, experienced an Athenian flame, when, as we have seen, Letter XVI., verse 85, he courted Orythia, daughter of Erechtheus king of Athens.

12. *Eolus.* The sovereign of the winds.

13. *With rabid verve he sings.* The wind whistles as if in mad mockery of his complaint.

*Couldst lend me but thy wings.* Dedalus, one of the most acute and inventive artists, was an Athenian. We have seen, Letter III., verse 15.

## 14.

We'd try how be it the ærian field to use;  
 Experienced flood and blast.  
 Meanwhile that wind and sea deny, we muse  
 On happy moments past.

## 15.

The sun was set: 'tis pleasure to recall:  
 Enamoured leaving home,  
 Quickly the vesture off and fear withal,  
 A plunge divides the foam.

## 16.

Trembled the moonbeam on the liquid field,  
 Companion of my way.  
 "Goddess," I cry to Luna, "convoy yield:  
 "Latmus with joy repay!

## 17.

"So thy Endymion e'er be kind and sooth,  
 "Bend thy soft light on me.  
 "Thou lov'dst a mortal, my sweet flame in truth  
 "A goddess well might be.

## 18.

"Her manners worthy of the heart divine  
 "Within her breast that warms:  
 "No fairer face but Venus's and thine  
 "Believe, for you see her charms.

---

that he prostituted his skill in serving the unnatural desire of Pasiphaë in Crete. For this he was confined in the labyrinth of his own constructing, and his son Icarus with him, by King Minos. In order to effect their escape he constructed wings of feathers and wax, and they both took flight together. Crossing the sea, however, Icarus mounted too high: the heat of the sun melted the wax, his wings fell to pieces, and he into the water, where he was drowned.

16. *Luna*, or Phœbe, or Diana. The moon.

*Latmus with joy repay*. May Latmus repay your kindness by the joy you will experience there. Latmus is the mountain in Caria on which Endymion slept when Phœbe fell in love with him. See note, Letter XV., verse 22.

## 19.

"Your orb refulgent comes in silver glow:  
 "All starry lights out-shined.  
 "So she in beauty first. This you must know;  
 "Or Cynthia's light is blind."

## 20.

Musings like these, or something near the same,  
 Beguile my nightly way.  
 The wave, bespangled with Diana's flame,  
 Rivals a dawn of day.

## 21.

No noise, no murmur heard, nor aught to move,  
 Save me upon the main.  
 The Alcyons only, twittering Ceyx's love,  
 Seem sweetly to complain.

## 22.

Weary, the wave we press with elbow square,  
 Our view to raise the more.  
 We catch your light, and say, "My flame is there,  
 "My star is on that shore."

## 23.

Lost vigour here returns: as firm as bold  
 Through milder sea we move.  
 Why feel we no effect of nipping cold?  
 The heart is warm with love.

19. *So she.* Hero.

*Or Cynthia's light is blind.* Cynthia is another name of the moon, Apollo and Diana being called Cynthius and Cynthia from Mount Cynthus in Delphos, the site of their great temple.

20. *Diana's flame.* The moon's rays.

21. *The Alcyons only twittering Ceyx's love.* The Alcyons, or Halcyons, are the birds commonly called the king-fisher. The species was originally a beautiful girl, called Alcyone, daughter of Eolus. She married Ceyx, son of Lucifer, who was drowned on his return from Delphos, where he had been to consult the oracle. The wife had a presentiment of his fate in a dream, and, seeing soon afterwards his body washed on shore, she threw herself into the sea, and they both became halcyons, or king-fishers.

22. *Weary, the wave we press with elbow square.* In the sea, which swimmers call treading water.

## 24.

And nearer as the well-known rocks appear,  
Our nerves grow vigorous strong.  
But once yourself in view, spectatress dear !  
'Tis then we cut along.

## 25.

Aiming for your applause the stroke to urge,  
With grace, as swimmers ken.  
Old nurse scarce keeps you from the foaming  
I saw 't : no cheating then. [surge :

## 26.

Now hard to hold, what effort she can make,  
Your little feet are wet.  
At length we clasp, and sweetest kisses take :  
Great gods ! worth seas to get.

## 27.

Across my shoulders now a cloak you throw :  
Press water from my hair.  
The rest of night well doth the turret know,  
And lamp that guides me there.

## 28.

No more could I describe that heavenly night  
Than Hellespontus' weed,  
And fewer moments given to our delight,  
To snatch them more the need.

## 29.

But now the herald Lucifer precedes  
Tithonus' spouse, Aurore ;  
And, kisses multiplied while time accedes,  
We sigh the night's no more.

---

28. *Than Hellespontus' weed* could describe it.

29. *The herald Lucifer.* The morning star.

*Tithonus' spouse, Aurore.* See Letter XVI., note 49, on "Phrygian Aurora's theft."

## 30.

Compelled at length old nurse's hint to see,  
 We strain a last adieu,  
 And part. Remeasuring the virgin sea,  
 I look till lost your view.

## 31.

Onward to thee one swims: the backward line  
 Mere wreck, nor power nor will:  
 And, believe it too, theeward the waves decline,  
 Hither 'tis all up-hill.

## 32.

Loth to reach home as not to home allied:  
 Home now to me is none.  
 Alas! that two such hearts the seas divide,  
 Two made to be in one.

## 33.

Let Sestos me or you Abydos take:  
 Either would please the twain.  
 My soul's disturbed as often as the lake;  
 Light air makes heavy pain.

## 34.

Our loves the dolphins seem to understand,  
 And other fish to feel:  
 My very path is known from land to land,  
 Like furrows of the wheel.

## 35.

'Twas my complaint no way but this to have,  
 Which losing makes me sigh.  
 Foam o'er the sea of Helle tops the wave:  
 Ships ill at anchor lie.

30. *The virgin sea.* The Hellespont, named from the virgin Helle. See Letter XII., note 2.

31. *Mere wreck.* I am a mere wreck on the water, without force or will.

33. *Let Sestos me.* Sestos her town, Abydos his.

*Light air makes heavy pain.* The air, light body as it is, when agitated to storm makes pain, which is heavily afflictive.

35. *The sea of Helle.* The Hellespont.



## 36.

This sea its epithet when first it bare,  
 Must then have been the same :  
 Ill-starred from Helle, and, though me it spare,  
 It has an evil name.

## 37.

Phryx is my envy, whom in air along  
 The golden ram conveyed :  
 Yet coveting nor ship nor sheep so long  
 As a calm sea be made.

## 38.

No art for me : sea-room and leave to swim,  
 The same my ship and crew.  
 Let Arctos teach the Tyrian sails to trim :  
 My polar star, 'tis you.

## 39.

One seeks Andromeda, and one the Crown,  
 And one the Greater Bear :  
 Nor Perseus', Jove's, nor Bacchus' love we own,  
 As guide whereby to fare.

37. *Phryx*. The brother of Helle. See on the subject of the golden ram, Letter XII., note 2.

38. *The same my ship and crew*. I, the swimmer, am ship and navigator.

*Let Arctos teach the Tyrian sails to trim*. Arctos here expresses the constellation of Ursa Minor, whose principal star marks the north pole. Tyrian sails, because ancient Tyre was the great emporium of the world for fleets and commerce.

39. *One seeks Andromeda, and one the Crown,  
 And one the Greater Bear*.

Andromeda, the Crown, and the Great Bear are all constellations in the northern region of the heavens, and were all originally beautiful women. Andromeda, as we have seen, in note on Letter XV., verse 9, was saved and espoused by Perseus. The Crown is Ariadne, who addresses the tenth Letter to Theseus. (See, as to the Crown, Letter II., notes 19 and 20.) The Greater Bear was Calisto, one of Diana's nymphs, deceived by Jupiter under the form of Diana herself. Juno, in revenge, changed the lady into a bearess, but Jupiter in compassion placed her in the heavens as the constellation named Ursa Major. Hence the next line,—*Perseus', Jove's, and Bacchus' loves*,—indicates Andromeda, Calisto, and Ariadne.

40.

Yonder's another flame surer than these,  
 Guide of my love to shine :  
 Be that my cynosure to cleave the seas  
 True as Thessalian pine.

41.

We'd vie with young Palæmon o'er the tide,  
 Or him made god by weed.  
 When with continued stroke my nerves are tried,  
 Onward inept to speed,

42.

I say, "Good arm, 'tis no small prize to hold  
 "Her neck in close embrace."  
 Renewed at once, strike forward firm and bold  
 As runners in the race.

43.

'Tis then we follow where the loves entrain  
 For thee, my heavenly aim !  
 Thee worthy heaven, but earthly still remain  
 Or lead me to the same.

44.

Earthly you are and yet to me denied,  
 The seas distract my heart.  
 And what avails our channel be not wide ?  
 No less we are apart.

40. *Yonder is another flame.* That is, your lamp at the window.  
*Thessalian pine.* The expression indicates Jason's famous ship *Argo*, which was built in Thessaly.

41. *Young Palæmon.* He was the son of Athamas and Ino, and originally called Melicerta. Being one day in danger of his life from his father's anger, his mother, Ino, snatched him in her arms and leapt with him into the sea, where Neptune had pity on them, and they at once became sea-gods. Ino was afterwards called Leucothoe and Melicerta Palæmon.

*Or him made god by weed.* This was Glaucus, a fisherman of Antedon in Beotia, and son of Neptune and Nais. At work one day with his line, he perceived that all the fish he took and laid on the grass acquired new vigour and leaped back into the sea. Attributing this effect to the grass, he tasted of it, and immediately felt a propension to plunge into the sea, which he did. Oceanus and Thetis made him a sea-deity.

43. *Or lead me to the same.* The same heaven with you.

## 45.

Were it not better at creation's end ?  
 My hopes all far away ?  
 The nearer you my ~~vitals~~ more incend :  
 Hope tortured by delay.

## 46.

My love so near : as if in reach she lies.  
 That well-nigh makes me weep.  
 What is 't but thirsting for the fruit that flies ?  
 Water that mocks the lip ?

## 47.

You, near me, but at will of wave to find :  
 No storm can see me blest.  
 Though nothing falser than the waves and wind,  
 There hope alone can rest.

## 48.

'Tis summer yet : what when the Pleiads rain ?  
 Boötes' rude seas toss ?  
 Or know we not how links of love entrain,  
 Or still the flood we cross.

## 49.

Nor deem, the thing far off, we promise well  
 Soon you shall see the proof.  
 Continue but a while this awful swell,  
 'Tis tried, however rough.

46. *What is 't but thirsting for the fruit that flies,  
 Water that mocks the lip.*

Alluding to the punishment of Tantalus, noted Letter XVI., verse 52.

48. *What when the Pleiads rain ?  
 Boötes' rude seas toss ?*

A star culminating at midnight was considered to have a certain influence. Now the constellation of the Pleiads or Pleiades comes to the meridian at midnight in the middle of November, that of Boötes in the beginning of December, which are the season of winter and rude weather.

*Or know we not.* Either we do not know.

49. *The thing far off.* Because the danger is now at a distance,

## 50.

Either my happy efforts safe arrive,  
Or death my love to end.  
Still wishing on to Sestos' shore to drive,  
Tow'rd you in death to tend.

## 51.

You'll weep : that hand to grace my corse will  
You'll say, "He died through me!" [deign :  
But hold : our augury, too fraught with pain,  
Is read distastefully.

## 52.

I've done. Forgive and join with me a prayer :  
The winds may calm their ire,  
Or find repose, enough to help me there ;  
Then let the clouds spit fire.

## 53.

Our hull once moored in its own happy cove,  
In none so snug to stay,  
Let blustering Boreas keep where holds me love,  
More loth to wend away.

## 54.

No more complaining of the mountain wave,  
Rating the boisterous wind ;  
Me let them hold as your embraces have,  
And so two causes bind.

## 55.


When the storm wills, my native oars I'll ply :  
Feed still our beacon flame.  
Till then these lines on that sweet bosom lie :  
May I soon do the same !

---

53. *Our hull once moored in its own happy cove.* Myself having once attained the joy of being in your company.

54. *And so two causes bind.* The winds and your love.

55. *Feed still my beacon flame.* Still put oil in my directing lamp, and keep it burning.



## LETTER XIX.

### HERO TO LEANDER.

---

#### ARGUMENT.

Hero, in answering Leander's letter, expresses the ardour of her love, and invokes its object to come to their mutual embrace. Shows that her affection, being that of woman, is more than what men can feel. She ventures to accuse him of inertness, and to upbraid him with not sustaining his reputation as a swimmer. Now she rails at the angry ocean, now expresses her dread lest Leander should have borne his affections elsewhere. She reflects, however, that such suspicion is mere unfounded conjecture. In fine, she dreads the storm herself, and enjoins her lover to trust to none but propitious seas.

---

#### 1.

THE health, Leander, you in words convey  
To be my health, indeed,  
- Hasten to come: too sore all slow delay  
That may our joy impede.

#### 2.

Pardon a truth: impatient is my love.  
With equal flame we burn,  
But less my power; and virile actions prove  
Your minds of stronger turn.

#### 3.

Stronger in soul as sinew men are found.  
My spirits fail the while.  
With men the hunt and tillage of the ground  
The lingering hours beguile.

---

1. The first two stanzas answer to six lines of the Latin.

2. *Your minds.* The minds of men.

## 4.

The circus or the forum men employ,  
 Or docile colt to break,  
 Or fish or bird to tackle or decoy;  
 At eve their wine they take.

## 5.

Deprived of these, though Hero's love were less,  
 Yet love her only aid :  
 And Hero loves, O my voluptuousness,  
 More, more than can be paid.

## 6.

Either with my good nurse we talk of thee,  
 Seek causes of demur ;  
 Or wander, chafing at the storm-rid sea,  
 And your own complaints recur.

## 7.

If but the tempest seem its rage forego,  
 "He will not come," I say,  
 And weep complaining. The sad tears that flow  
 Nurse, soothing, wipes away.

## 8.

Often we seek your print upon the sand,  
 As sand could print retain.  
 And ask if any from Abydos land,  
 Or thither part again.

4. *The circus.* School for athletic exercises.

*The forum.* The great mart and public tribunal.

5. *And Hero loves, O my voluptuousness,*  
*More, more than can be paid.*

Hero loves, O thou who art all voluptuousness to me, more, more, much more, than it is possible for man to love woman.

8. *As.* As if.

## 9.

Why say how oft are kissed your vestment here,  
 Left when about to swim ?  
 So, as day wanes and sweeter night draws near,  
 With the first starry glim,

## 10.

The beacon of your course is set alight  
 Upon the well-known tower ;  
 Then knitting, spinning, wile we on the night,  
 Till nearly morning hour.

## 11.

You ask what all this time we talk about ?  
 Leander all my say.  
 "Thinkest, O nurse, Leander be come out ?  
 "Wake they his voyage to stay ?

## 12.

"Deem'st thou as yet his members rubbed with  
 "Or still their garments keep ?" [oil,  
 She nods : unheeding or your love or toil,  
 But dropping off to sleep.

## 13.

Then a while after, "Now he swims," I say ;  
 "Now he throws back the wave."  
 Again a few threads drawn : "Now he's half way,  
 "Mid-seas his members lave."

9. *Why say?* Why need I say ?

10. *The beacon.* The lamp at my window.

11. *Wake they his voyage to stay?* Is it his family, still awake, who prevent him from departing ?

12. *Deem'st thou as yet his members rubbed with oil?* Rubbing with oil, preparatory, among the ancients, to all athletic exercises, was peculiarly necessary for a long swim.

## 14.

And then a prayer with anxious look around :  
    " His course the waters aid !"  
Then list attentive deeming every sound  
    By your arriving made.

## 15.

At length, the greater part of evening sped,  
    Sleep's drowsy beetle hums.  
" Haply," I sigh, " he's weary of my bed,  
    " And but unwilling comes."

## 16.

Dreaming, your natant form approaches near :  
    It comes : has closely pressed.  
Now for your humid limbs a cloak I bear,  
    Now lock you to my breast.

## 17.

And more besides indecorous to tell,  
    Voluptuous to do.  
Ah me, the fleeting good and false as well,  
    Waking bereft of you !

## 18.

More firmly do we to our loves their right :  
    Why lack those joys so dear ?  
Why pass so many a cold unwedded night ?  
    Slow swimmer, why not here ?

## 19.

Though turbulent of late the sea I wot,  
    Last night a milder air.  
Why let it pass, ills dreaming that are not ?  
    'Tis gone : no bliss we share.

---

15. *Sleep's drowsy beetle hums.* We are getting out of Ovid into Shakespeare : we cannot help it. These are no thefts on the great bard, but lowly homages done to his stupendous memory.

18. *More firmly do we.* Let us more firmly do.



## 20.

Suppose like chance be given to come, the first  
 Was best beyond all cess :  
 And say in no long time the sky grew curst,  
 We've known you cross in less.

## 21.

Wind-bound within my arms you'd not complain,  
 Nor dread the welkin's rage.  
 For me, I'd gaily hear the wind and rain,  
 Nor seek their wrath to assuage.

## 22.

But what new terrors make the way more dread,  
 More fearful rude the sea ?  
 Remember once the pudder over-head  
 But little less could be :

## 23.

'Twas when I cried, "Oh dare, but not so dare  
 "As make sad tears to flow."  
 Whence this your fear? and former courage  
 where ?  
 Where the great swimmer now ?

## 24.

Yet over-hardihood is big with fright :  
 Be wisely safe your trip.  
 E'en do as now, your love be as you write,  
 Nor ever doomed to slip.

20. *The first was best.* As freeing me from so much of anxiety caused by waiting.

*We've known you cross in less.* In less time than the said fair weather lasted.

21. *For me I'd gaily hear the wind and rain.* Being well housed and in your company.

22. *The pudder over head.* Same observation as on verse 15. "*We are in the vein*" for "*picking and stealing*."

## 25.

Far less by winds we fear our hope delayed  
Than love more false than they.  
Our worser dread the dangerous voyage ill-paid  
By joys that lightly weigh.

## 26.

Oft fear we Sestos too unworthy prove  
To espouse Abydos' bed.  
Lighter all misery else than my true love  
Be disinherited.

## 27.

Were other arms to press to other heart,  
Old love a new to end,  
Rather my death, ere played the trait'rous part,  
Its villany forfend!

## 28.

All this concerns no sign of coming dole,  
No acts that fame besmear.  
But, dreading all, doubt is beyond control:  
Distance to love is fear.

## 29.

Happy who, present, the true fault must believe,  
And disbelieve the vain.  
Absent, the imagined move, the real deceive;  
In either equal pain.

---

25. *Far less by winds we fear our hope delayed.* I fear much less my hope being disappointed by winds than by wavering love, more false than the winds themselves.

*Our worser dread the dangerous voyage ill-paid.* My greater fear is lest you should think the danger of the voyage too lightly compensated by joys that you set little value on.

27. *Old love a new to end.* Were a new love to end our old one. *Ere played the trait'rous part.* Before you shall have played so trait'rous a part.

29. *The imagined faults; the real faults.*

## 30.

Would you were here ! would 'twere the wind !—  
your sire !

No new amour stepped in !  
Ah ! were it that, I should at once expire :  
The mere intent were sin.

## 31.

But 'tis not so : my fears are false and vain :  
The winds my joy deny.  
Hark how the beaten strand resounds again  
To the torrential sky.

## 32.

Involved in mist, is Nephele come down  
Her daughter's fate to weep ?  
Or does the step-dame Ino furious frown  
That Helle names the deep ?

## 33.

An ill-starr'd passage this to woman proves :  
Here Helle's, here my bane.  
But, Neptune thou, oh think of thy own loves  
Unscathed by winds insane.

30. *Would 'twere the wind, &c.* I would that the wind were the real cause of your delay, or your father, and not a new mistress.  
*The mere intent were sin.* Merely to have conceived such an intention would be a sin.

32. *Involved in mist, is Nephele come down ?  
Her daughter's fate to weep, &c.*

Nephele after death became a cloud, and her name, in Greek, has ever since expressed that idea. She was the first wife of Athamas king of Thebes, and mother of Phryx and his sister Helle, who had the misfortune to give her name to the Hellespont straits by being drowned in that sea. Nephele was divorced by Athamas, who afterwards espoused Ino, daughter of Cadmus. The jealousy of the new bride was the cause of the departure of Phryx and Helle on the golden ram, consequently of that fate over which the cloud Nephele is now shedding tears.

33. *But, Neptune thou, oh think of thy own loves.* Here she enumerates a few of Neptune's gallantries, which show him to have been a worthy emulant of his brother Jupiter.

*Amymone* was one of the fifty daughters of Danaus. (See Letter XIV.) Her murdered husband's name was Enceladus. She was excused from the punishment imposed on her sisters in hell, that of filling a leaky

## 34.

If not Amymone nor Tyro are  
 Vain fables of love-sin,  
 Alcyon nor Circe, nor Medusa's hair,  
 Ere serpents egg'd therein,

## 35.

Heaven raised Celæno, fair Loadice,  
 And others I have read :  
 That these, oh Neptune, all were kind to thee,  
 Verse hath accredited.

## 36.

Why then, so oft the power of Cupid known,  
 With tempests bar our way ?  
 Spare us : and on the deep let thunders groan :  
 Poor Helle's fever stay.

## 37.

On fleets and magnate seas exert thy might :  
 Our strait fits milder rule.  
 Shall Ocean's god a swimming younker fright,  
 'Twould shame a lowly pool ?

## 38.

He's no Ulysses' seed, though nobly born,  
 To fear thy anger's scope.

*cask with water.* The interest of Neptune was no doubt of use to her. She became, by the sea-god, mother of Nauphilus.

*Tyro* bare the twins Pelias and Neleus. She was a nymph whom Neptune had gained by assuming the form of her lover Enipeus.

*Alcyone.* This is not the Alcyone noted with Ceyx (in Letter XVIII., verse 21.) but one of the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas and Pleione.

*Medusa* was the only one of the three sister gorgons not immortal. She is said to have been beautiful, and particularly in her splendid hair. Neptune won her in the temple of Minerva. This profanation offended the goddess, who punished Medusa by converting her beautiful hair to snakes.

35. *Heaven-raised Celæno.* Celæno is another daughter of Atlas and Pleione. She is termed heaven-raised because all the seven sisters after death became stars and form the constellation of the Pleiades.

*Loadice.* It is not well-known to what Loadice, nor to what *Circe* in the last verse, the text refers.

36. *Poor Helle's fever stay.* Allay the tumult of the waves of the Hellespont.

38. *He's no Ulysses seed.* Neptune might owe a grudge to Ulysses either for the revenge he took on Palamedes, a grandson of the god, who

Oh spare us both, nor leave two wrecks forlorn,  
His body and my hope.

## 39.

My friendly lamp now sputters while I write :  
It is a kindly sign.  
Nurse feeds it, saying, "Three to-morrow night :"  
And then she sips the wine.

## 40.

Oh make us three, gliding the waters through,  
Be locked to my warm breast,  
To the camp, deserter ! Love complains of you.  
Sole in mid couch to rest !

## 41.

Fear not, but come : sweet Venus aids the bold.  
The floods obey their child.  
It likes me well the wat'ry way to hold,  
Though this to men more mild :

## 42.

And hence, when erst by Phyrx and Helle tried,  
The maiden's title bare.  
Haply for the return you dread the tide,  
A double way to fare.

## 43.

Then let each other meet, half-channel o'er,  
Exchange half way a kiss ;

had detected his feigned madness to avoid the Trojan war, or for having extinguished the only eye of the giant Polyphemus, who was a son of the ocean deity.

39. *My friendly lamp now sputters.* These lesser omens even yet have their respect. Our own sea-coal fire sputters purses or coffins and cross bones.

41. *The floods obey their child.* We have seen, Letter XV., note 53, that Venus sprang from the sea.

*This to men more kind.* This sea, the Hellespont.

42. *And hence, when erst by Phyrx and Helle tried,  
The maiden's title bare.*

This sea took the name of Helle, and not of Phryxus, because she perished in it, and not he.

This done, let each return to our own shore ;  
Small better than no bliss.

44.

Would love to fear, imposing secret flame,  
Or fear to love gave right :  
Two feelings clash : love, fear divergent aim :  
One duty one delight.

45.

Jason, once entered Colchos roads to moor,  
Medea bore away ;  
The Trojan rake set foot on Sparta's shore  
And lured his easy prey.

46.

But you possess, depart, come, leave again,  
O'er seas that keels ill dare,  
And still, O youthful victor of the main,  
Despise them, but with fear.

47.

Engulfed are ships, chief works of human skill :  
May hands be surer trust ?  
No seaman dares confide to them until,  
His vessel wrecked, he must.

48.

Ah me unhappy, loth to instil my theme,  
Be stronger than I teach.  
Oh come, oft tossed but safe across the stream,  
Kissed dripping on the beach.

---

44. *Would love to fear.* I would that our love gave way to our fear, which imposes secrecy, or that our fear gave way to our love and withdrew itself from tormenting us.

45. *Medea bore away.* See her Letter to Jason, No. 12.

*The Trojan rake.* Paris.

*Lured his easy prey.* Helen. We have just seen their letters to each other.

## 49.

And yet, as the blue waters meet my sight,  
 A tremor chills my breast.  
 No less the terror in a dream last night :  
 Prayers expiate are addressed.

## 50.

'Twas near the break of dawn, my lantern waned,  
 True dreams then haunt our bed :  
 My distaff fell : I, Morpheus-constrained,  
 Laid down my weary head.

## 51.

In sleep appeared, hard by a storm-rid strand,  
 A dolphin scudding past :  
 And sudden, hurled upon the thirsty sand,  
 The creature breathed its last.

## 52.

This strikes with terror. Smile not, but beware,  
 Confide to milder sea.  
 If not thyself, yet thy loved Hero spare,  
 Who but exists in thee.

## 53.

Still nourish hope the winds may bate their war ;  
 Then safely come thy way.  
 While yet the hurricanes imperious bar,  
 A letter soothes delay.

---

49. *Prayers expiate are addressed.* I have repeated the formula of prayer and made the proper offerings, to avert the evils that my dream may portend.

50. *Morpheus-constrained.* Overcome by sleep.

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## LETTER XX.

### ACONTIUS TO CYDIPPE.

---

#### ARGUMENT.

Acontius, a youth of honourable but plebeian extraction in the island of Cea, was in Delos at the celebration of the feasts of Diana, where great numbers of youth of both sexes had assembled. He became violently smitten with the beauty of Cydippe, a maiden of noble family and, not daring to solicit her hand on account of the disparity of rank he had recourse to a novel stratagem. He inscribed on the rind of a beautiful apple the following couplet:

"I swear, on penalty of Dian's wrath,

To be your wife, and herein plight my troth."

This done, he repaired to the temple, and in the midst of the ceremonies, rolled the fruit to the feet of Cydippe. She, in the innocence or unsuspicion, read the verse, and was from that moment betrothed to Acontius: for, in the temple of Delian Diana, whatever was promised became ratified by the deity, and made law. Some time after this, the maiden's father, ignorant of what had passed, engaged her in marriage to another. Simultaneously, Cydippe fell ill of a violent fever, and Acontius, in this letter, seeks to persuade her that the malady is an infliction of Diana for her not having fulfilled what she had promised in presence of the divinity.

---

#### 1.

BE not afraid, for nothing more you 'll swear;  
Once done is ample deed.  
Enough that now a sacred tie you wear:  
Then prithee on proceed.

#### 2.

These suff'rings are my grief: gods soothe you  
And every ailment heal. [pain  
Nay, why that blush? For, as in Dian's fane,  
Your crimsoned cheek I feel.

---

1. The first eight lines answer to six of the Latin.

*A sacred tie.* The promise contained in the verse which you have pronounced in Diana's temple.



## 3.

No crime my view, but faith and troth to plight,  
 In honourable guise.  
 Granted, what fruit conveyed to your chaste  
 Is read by a surprise, [sight

## 4.

Its purport holds. The pact may rather you  
 Than Delia keep in mind.  
 But there my fear, a fear more anxious too,  
 As love-ties closer bind.

## 5.

Great from the first, my love by time still grew,  
 The more hope promised fair.  
 You gave the hope ; my love believed it true :  
 Dian may witness bear.

## 6.

Present she stood your solemn pledge to note,  
 And seemed to nod assent.  
 Promise by fraud inveigled you may quote :  
 The motive still Love lent.

## 7.

What asked my fraud ? With Canace to wed.  
 In judgment let us pause.  
 To ruse not nature but your beauty led :  
 Yourself, sweet girl, the cause.

## 4.

*The pact may rather you  
 Than Delia keep in mind.*

I wish much rather that you should keep your promise than that Diana should remember it, and punish the breach of it.

*But there my fear.* Lest you neglect the engagement.

*As love-ties closer bind.* The more my love attaches me to you.

5. *The more hope promised fair.* Still more in proportion as hope offered fairer prospect of success.

*Dian may witness bear.* Since the basis of my hope was laid in her temple.

6. *Promise by fraud inveigled you may quote.* You may argue against me that your promise was inveigled by fraud.

8.

Ingenious love with words then tied you down,  
This at my door may lie.  
Affiances he made in form his own:  
A love-taught lawyer I.

9.

Let it be deemed to fraud and over-reach,  
If it be fraud to love.  
This suppliant rescript of imploring speech  
Another fraud may prove.

10.

If there be wrong in love, mine injures still,  
Persistently to pray.  
Some by the sword possess in spite of will:  
Shall my poor style effray?

11.

Gods aiding many a bond your faith shall tie,  
Mine ever to remain.  
A thousand wiles untried: though up-hill, I  
And Love our point will gain.

12.

Doubt they success? in some love-trap you fall.  
Heaven orders, but you are caught.  
Some toils may miss, but not escaped are all  
That Love for you hath wrought.

13.

If tactics fail, by arms, then, be borne off  
To our adoring heart.  
We are none of those brave Paris' deed who scoff,  
He dared play out his part.

---

8. *In form his own.* In a formula invented by Love himself: namely, the verse of the Argument.

9. *This suppliant rescript.* This supplicating letter which you read.

10. *Some by the sword possess in spite of will.* Possess their mistress, whom they carry off in spite of her will.

12. *Toils.* Love-traps.

13. *Brave Paris' deed.* The rape of Helen, on which we have seen many Letters, and which Acontius admires. *Similis simili gaudet.*

## 14.

Ere long — but mum : such rapine's pay is death.  
 So be it ; sans thee 't were worse.  
 Less beauty were to claim with vocal breath :  
 Your lovely traits need force.

## 15.

'Tis your own work ; your planet-beaming eye  
 Hath lighted up this flame.  
 Your golden hair and neck of ivory,  
 Would to my clasp it came !

## 16.

Your grace, your mien, modestly unconstrained ;  
 Not prettier Thetis' feet ;  
 And hidden beauties, not to be profaned,  
 Of nature's work complete.

## 17.

Is 't strange, seduced by features so divine,  
 A man your pledge would bear ?  
 Be you but captured ! forced to yield, in fine !  
 E'en let them say my snare,

## 18.

Envy we 'll bear : but a reward is gained.  
 Why not the deed be paid ?  
 Briseïs and Hesione constrained,  
 Each with her captor staid.

14. *Ere long.* I will carry you off as Paris did Helen.  
*Sans thee 't were worse.* To live without thee would be worse than death.

*Vocal breath.* By word of mouth.

17. *E'en let them say my snare.* Let them say that your illness was caused by my stratagem of throwing the apple.

18. *Why not the deed be paid ?* I have performed the task of winning : I merit the reward of wearing.

*Briseïs.* We have seen, Letter III., that she became the prize of Achilles at an early period of the last Trojan war, and was entirely devoted to him.

*Hesione.* Was daughter of Laomedon king of Troy. She was doomed, as an expiatory sacrifice to Apollo and Neptune, to be exposed to a sea

## 19.

Scold, an you must, your anger shall have way,  
Yet you be holden still.  
We who the anger caused, shall, caused, allay :  
Lend but a docile will.

## 20.

Be we allowed to shed the contrite tear ;  
To add imploring speech ;  
Or, like the slaves, when chastisement they fear,  
Clasping your knees, beseech.

## 21.

You slur your right. Call up ; nor absent doom !  
As mistress say, " Appear ! "  
Imperious, you may violence assume ;  
Your nails our visage tear.

## 22.

All we 'd endure, nor see without regret  
You hurt that little hand.  
Yet why of chain or gyve impose the let ?  
My love is firmer band.

## 23.

Assuaged your anger, with yourself you muse :  
" In love how patient he ! "  
And inward whisper, ceasing to accuse,  
" Who serves so well, serve me."

---

monster, but was delivered by Hercules, who slew the creature. Her father, however, refused to the conqueror the stipulated reward of a hundred horses; hence Hercules besieged Troy, took it, and put all the men of the family to the sword except Priam, whom he made king. He carried off Hesione, and gave her to his companion in arms, Telamon. This was the first Trojan war.

21. *You slur your right.* He assimilates himself to a slave.

*Call up.* Summon me before you.—*Nor absent doom.* And do not condemn me unheard.

## 24.

Now false arraigned, unheard: my thriving cause  
 Fails, having none to prone.  
 But mark this well, howe'er our writing flaws,  
 You hold on me alone.

## 25.

Dian deserved not to be wronged with me:  
 To her let promise bind.  
 Dian was present there that blush to see,  
 And bear your words in mind.

## 26.

When omens fail, 'tis then she's wrath indeed,  
 Deceived her deity.  
 Witness the boar of Calydon, and heed:  
 Unsure her fealty.

## 27.

Witness Acteon turned stag, death in the fangs  
 Of his own dogs who found.  
 The weeping mother, too, a rock who hangs,  
 O'er the Mygdonian ground.

24. *False arraigned.* Falsely, as he pretends.

*Unheard: my thriving cause.* Since I am not admitted into your family to defend myself, and make openly and boldly my proposals, which are just and reasonable.

*Having none to prone.* Having no advocate to defend it.

*Howe'er our writing flaws.* However my writing may be deemed an offence.

*You hold on me alone.* In law you can have no claim on any one but me.

26. *Witness the boar of Calydon and heed.* Ceneus king of Calydon, in a general sacrifice of thanks for an abundant harvest, forgot his offerings to Diana. The goddess punished the neglect by sending an enormous boar to ravage all the lands. See note on Cénides or Meleager (Letter III., verse 33).

*Unsure her fealty.* It would be dangerous trusting to her pity.

27. *Acteon turned stag.* Acteon, who was a famous hunter, son of Aristæus and Antonoe, daughter of Cadmus, unwittingly came in view of Diana and her nymphs bathing. The goddess splashed him with water, and he became a stag. The unlucky sportsman was hunted to death by his own hounds.

*The weeping mother, too, a rock who hangs*

*O'er the Mygdonian ground.*

This refers to Niobe, daughter of the unhappy Tantalus (noted Letter XVI., verse 52). Proud of her numerous progeny of seven sons

28.

Alas, Cydippe, truth is hard to tell,  
 Lest for myself it plead.  
 Let us be plain : 'tis this makes you unwell,  
 Now at the age to wed.

29.

Dian afflicts for good ; and, unforsworn,  
 Safe guards your faith and you.  
 Perceiving you to perjury are borne,  
 She bars the sin to do.

30.

Beware the touchy virgin take up arms,  
 Still mild if you incline.  
 Ah, prithee, not with ills affect those charms ;  
 Preserve that face as mine.

31.

Preserve those traits, made to incend my heart,  
 That fair celestial glow.  
 Should a competitor usurp my part,  
 Be pale as I am now.

32.

Me tortures haunt, you ill or that you wed :  
 The better hard to choose.  
 Tortured in causing pain unmerited  
 With my unhappy ruse.

and seven daughters, she drew comparisons with herself unfavourable to the goddess Latona, who had only her Apollo and Diana. Hence revenge on the part of the two celestial powers. Apollo and Diana each took their bow and quiver: one shot the seven sons, the other the seven daughters. The mother was petrified in the sudden shock of grief, and became a precipitous rock "on the Mygdonian ground," that is, near Mount Sipylus.

29. *Unforsworn, safe guards your faith and you.* If you do not falsify your oath good faith remains intact, and your health is restored, since Diana's infliction will be removed.

30. *The touchy virgin.* Diana, extremely sensitive to neglect of her honours, as we have seen, note 26.

*If you incline.* If you bow to her will.

31. *Should a competitor.* If a competitor should.

## 33.

Would on my head your perjury might fall !  
 You safe, on me the woe !——  
 To learn your progress often near the hall  
 I wander to and fro.

## 34.

Or watch a slave to ask if all go well,  
 How food and sleep betide.  
 Ah me ! were it given to take a nurse's spell  
 Placed at your pillow side !

## 35.

Haply,—alas, and torment 'twere to see,—  
 Posted against your bed,  
 Another, hateful both to gods and me,  
 Supports that lovely head ;

## 36.

Or takes the hand, and, at the index vein,  
 Presses the wrist for cause ;  
 Or palps the heart, a kiss perhaps may gain :  
 Far over-due he draws.

## 37.

The ravisher ! at plundering not amiss !  
 To break another's hedge !  
 That harvest 's mine—an arrant theft that kiss !  
 Hands off ! She's mine by pledge !

## 38.

Villain, hold off that rude, unlawful touch :  
 Repeat it, and 'tis sin !  
 Seek some free maid. Is there a dearth of such ?  
 This law forbids to win.

33. *You safe, on me the woe.* You being restored to health, and I falling into your state of sickness.

36. *Presses the wrist for cause.* Feels the pulse to find the cause of the ailment.

*Far over-due he draws.* He takes more payment than is due for his services.

38. *Villain, hold off that rude, unlawful touch.* ("Two Gentlemen of Verona.") This and the next four stanzas are an apostrophe to Cydippe's admitted lover.

## 39.

You doubt? Herself the formula shall read,  
 And force you to believe.  
 Hence, interloper, from our right secede,  
 The precontracted leave.

## 40.

*Your* auspices, a word of human pact,  
 Are nothing to *our* bands.  
*We* hold from her, *you* by the father's act :  
 Second to her he stands.

## 41.

He promised her ; she plighted her own troth,  
 Whereto the gods respond.  
 He fears the lie ; she dreads the broken oath :  
 Which then the greater bond ?

## 42.

In fine, survey the risk on either part :  
 She ill, her father yare.  
 We, too, unfairly matched in force or heart,  
 Nor like in hope nor fear.

## 43.

You safe: I sit in dread of deadly blight:  
 I love what you but may.  
 Had you the sentiment of law or right,  
 You 'd honestly give way.—

39. *The formula.* The writing on the apple.

40. *Your auspices.* Your grounds for cherishing hope are no more than a word of human promise.

42. *We, too, unfairly matched in force or heart,  
 Nor like in hope nor fear.*

On our part, yours and mine, our fears and our hopes being unequal, we are unfairly matched.

43. *You safe.* To you no harm can happen your affections not being engaged, whereas I am in danger of dying if my hope should fail. I really do love her whom you only may love.



## 44.

Now see this savage urging unjust cause,  
 Cydippe, where we tend :  
 He makes your ailment, breaking Dian's laws ;  
 Send him his way to wend.

## 45.

From him you hold the danger of your life :  
 Impested may he lie !  
 Him once repelled, there ends the goddess' strife ;  
 Safe you, and saved am I.

## 46.

Fear not, fair maid, your health will soon return.  
 In the conscious temple pray.  
 Not oxen please the gods, nor scents that burn,  
 But those their vows who pay.

## 47.

Some seek a cure from fire, or steel, or both :  
 By herbs are some set free.  
 You need none such. Avoid the broken oath :  
 Save faith save you — and me.

## 48.

The first offence is void, absent the will :  
 The bond escaped your mind.  
 Now you're forewarned by me, and by the ill  
 Which comes your fault behind.

44. *Now see.* Having terminated his apostrophe to his rival he resumes his pleading to Cydippe.

*Breaking Dian's laws.* His persistency being contrary to the law of Diana's temple.

46. *The conscious temple.* The temple of Diana, conscious because there your infraction of the law is known.

47. *Some seek a cure from fire or steel, or both :*

*By herbs are some set free.*

Some ills are cured by burning, some by cutting, some by medicine.

## 49.

This danger past, in child-bearing you'll pray  
 On you those radiant hands.  
 Musing the goddess then will ask and say,  
 "This birth is from what bans?"

## 50.

Proffered your vow, she knows it false: you  
 Cheat of the gods she'll feel. [swear.  
 Deem not this said for me; higher my care;  
 My soul yearns for your weal.

## 51.

Why simply an ill health your parents moan?  
 Why on the truth so hush?  
 Your silence why? To mother all be known.  
 The action needs no blush.

## 52.

Tell them the process of the love-set seed,  
 In the fame of starry rays.  
 How, once beheld, if the thing had your heed,  
 I stood in stolid gaze.

## 53.

How, fixed like one whose wits are not his own,  
 Backward my mantle slid.  
 How, whence you knew not, rolled an apple down  
 In which grave words lay hid:

49. *On you those radiant hands.* The radiant hands of Diana to bless you, that goddess, as well as Juno, being patroness of childbirth.

51.

*Why simply an ill health your parents mourn?*

*Why on the truth so hush?*

Why are your parents left so ignorant of the real cause of your malady that they mourn simply your ill health instead of weeping your offence to the goddess?

52.

*Tell them the process of the love-set seed*

*In the fame of starry rays.*

Tell them the history of the apple thrown as a seed of love in the temple of Diana.

*Once beheld.* As soon as you were beheld by me.

53. *How, fixed.* Me standing fixed.

## 54.

How, soon as read, by holy Dian there  
 Your faith became fast bound :  
 And, that he feel the sense those verses bear,  
 Read him the distich found.

## 55.

“Espouse,” he ’ll cry ; “whate’er the gods bestow,  
 “Let him be sworn my son.”  
 Whom Dian wills be sure your sire will too,  
 And mother, if she is one.

## 56.

Let him inquire of who I am ; he ’ll own  
 Dian is kind to thee.  
 Ceos, my land, erst to the Muses known,  
 Girt by the Ægean sea.

## 57.

Nor will your line of noble ancestry  
 With me be misallied.  
 We’ve wealth, a name intact on probity,  
 And more — Love claims the bride.

## 58.

Though free, with better you could not unite.  
 Free or unfree ’tis true.  
 These in a dream me Phœbus bade indite :  
 These waking Love bids too.

54. *Read him the distich found.* The verse inscribed on the apple as given in the Argument.

55. *If she is one.* If she is a mother worthy to be so called.

56. *Ceos, my land.* Ceos, or Cea, or Coös, or Cos, is an island of the Ægean Sea, near Eubœa, where, as he affirms, the Muses were very anciently honoured.

## 59.

And if the latter's dart has wounded one,  
Of Phœbe's hand beware.  
Our common fate in pity do not shun ;  
Let both one safety share.

## 60.

Which if it hap, when joyous signals sound,  
And Delos' altars flame,  
A golden apple, thus inscribed around,  
Two verses shall proclaim :

## 61.

*Acontius by this image will imply  
His writing ratified.*  
And now, lest over-much your strength we try,  
Farewell, my future bride !

---

59. *Has wounded one.* Has wounded me.

*Phœbe.* Diana.

*Let both one safety share.* By submitting to Diana, and being united.

60. *When joyous signals sound.* The music announcing our marriage.

61. *His writing ratified.* The promise contained in the verse inscribed on the apple (see Argument) being ratified.

## LETTER XXI.

### CYDIPPE TO ACONTIUS.

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#### ARGUMENT.

Cydippe, having read the letter of Acontius, and understanding that her malady proceeds from the anger of Diana, is inclined, notwithstanding her parents' choice, to cede to the wishes of the lover rather than endure the malady which consumes her. In her answer, however, she combats the validity of the tie he has imposed on her, since it consists of mere words wanting the consent of her will. Yet, conclusive as her arguments are, she avows her fear of Diana; lays before her reader the picture of the debile state to which she is reduced, but lets slip, in so doing, a confession that she prefers him to his rival. She repels the idea, which he has thrown out, of her having favoured the latter; and, in fine, consents to marry Acontius.

---

#### 1.

FEARING, I read your letter in the mind

To swear no oath anew.

More had been tried, but, as you are pleased to

Once done is not to do. [find,

#### 2.

Read it had not been, save that to refuse

Rekindled Dian's ire.

Gifts though we give and frankincense infuse,

She favours your desire.

#### 3.

Urging the belief you claim, the more her rage :

Thesides less her care

A virgin should be kind to virgin age :

My maiden days she'll mar.

---

1. *More had been tried.* More would have been tried.

2. *Had not been.* Would not have been. *Had waked.* Would have waked. *Rekindled.* Would have rekindled.

3. *Urging the belief you claim, the more her rage.* To force me to believe you as you require she shows more anger.

*Thesides less her care.* Was taken less care for by her. From Phædra's Letter, No. IV., we know Thesides or Hippolytus to be a thorough

## 4.

This languor holds by inapparent cause,  
 And medicine is in vain.  
 Judge how debile, at every line a pause ;  
 Raising my head with pain.

## 5.

Hereto add fear that any but my maid  
 Know the converse we keep.  
 She sits at door, her answer duly paid  
 To comers : " She's asleep."

## 6.

At length this reason growing over stale  
 With credency to quote,  
 Perceiving those on whom 't would scarce avail,  
 She coughs to give me note.

## 7.

A word half-writ, within my dress I roll  
 The visible intrigue,  
 And, later, wearily resume the scroll :  
 Judge then of my fatigue.

## 8.

It were my death, you worthy to hear more,  
 Yet more than due is said.  
 'Tis then your scheming leads me to death's door :  
 Bad scheming dearly paid !

sportsman ; as such, and as a devoted bachelor, he could not but be agreeable to Diana. Phædra, as we have seen, her love being rejected, accused him to his father Theseus of soliciting her to sin. Theseus, after having upbraided the youth and rejected his denial of the crime, invoked their forefather, Neptune, to avenge the wrong, which Neptune did, for as he drove along the coast, his car drawn by a pair of the thorough-breds of those days, a sea monster frightened the nags : they ran away with the vehicle, and were, together with it and the driver, all dashed to pieces. Diana however afterwards, by the help of Esculapius, restored her favourite to life, and he was known under the name of Virbius ; that is, *bis vir*, twice a man.

5. *The converse we keep.* The correspondence we keep up.

7. *The visible intrigue.* The letter, the corpus delicti.

8. *Yet more than due is said.* I have said more than you deserve to hear ; you who are the cause of my malady.

## 9.

The fortune this our vaunted beauties gain !  
 To wake desire and die !  
 Would that our comeliness were counted plain,  
 In your unflattered eye.

## 10.

Now, lauded, here we moan, your strife the cause,  
 Hurt by the good we owe.  
 While you nor cede nor he his claim withdraws,  
 Each thwarts the other's vow.

## 11.

With me as with a ship by Boreas driven,  
 When back the flood constrains :  
 The time arrived by loving parents given,  
 High fever still remains.

## 12.

And on the wretched wedding day we find  
 Perseph'ne at the gate :  
 Hence shame and fear though no ill act in mind  
 To need celestial hate.

## 13.

One argues all to chance, the other's view  
 Sees gods our choice refuse.  
 Nor think that fame is silent about you,  
 Philters who're said to use.

10. *Hurt by the good we owe.* Injured by the beauty which I possess.  
*Nor he his claim withdraws.* He the lover accredited by my father  
 and mother.

*Each thwarts the other's vow.* Each labours to disappoint the  
 other's wish.

11. *The time arrived by loving parents given.* The time appointed  
 for the marriage of my kind parents.

12. *Persephone.* Another name for Proserpine, queen of the infernal  
 regions, and who presides over the dying. Hence the line implies  
 "death menacing the house."

*Hence shame and fear* are felt in my mind.

14.

Hidden the cause : my ills appear. Irate,  
 You mutual war. I moan.  
 Better unlove and treat me with your hate,  
 The one so fatal known.

15.

If your love injure, better love your foe :  
 Wish me a world of ill.  
 Either no care of your best hope you know,  
 And leave to die at will,

16.

Or, if for me in vain the heavens you move,  
 Why boast ? no thanks are due.  
 Dian you will not soften ? slight I prove :  
 You cannot ? she slights you.

17.

Would we had ne'er, or happy then not known  
 Where Delos island lay !  
 Then was our ship on evil waters thrown  
 At parting from our bay.

18.

What joy to go ! what haste to fling behind  
 Our home, when once aboard !  
 Twice we backed sail, returned with adverse wind :  
 Adverse ! the wind was tow'rd.

14. *You.* You two lovers.15. *Either no care of your best hope you know,  
 And leave to die at will.*

Either you take no care for me, whom you pretend to be your dearest hope, and leave me to die as I may.

16. *Dian you will not soften.* Let us suppose, on the one hand, that you will not appease Diana, you put a slight on me. Suppose, on the other hand, you cannot prevail on Diana, then she slights you. In either case you have no claim on me.

17. *Would we had ne'er, or happy then not known.* Would that I had never known where Delos was situated, or that I had been so happy as not to know it then.

*On evil waters.* On seas of bad omen.

18. *The wind was tow'rd.* Favourable to my interest if not to my wishes.



## 19.

Wind fair was foul, and fouler wind most fair,  
Hindering ill-omen'd course.  
Would it had still remained in vein contrair !  
Fool ! I had not found worse.

## 20.

Moved by great Delos' fame and all elate,  
Scarce seemed we go ahead.  
Impatient, oft the dull oars irritate,  
The little canvass spread.

## 21.

Behind lay Tenos, Andros, and Mycone :  
In view Delos sublime :  
" Island, thou fliest," I said in tetchy tone ;  
" Dost float as in old time ?"

## 22.

We land at length, about the close of day :  
Sol's team then going to rest.  
Soon as recalled to wend its morning way,  
By mother's care we're dressed.

## 23.

Herself set ornaments of gems and gold ;  
Arranged my robe. In fine,  
We go, and to the gods the place who hold,  
Pay thanks, incense, and wine.

---

19. *I had not.* I should not have.

20. *Moved by great Delos' fame.* Moved by the fame of the renowned island of Delos, birth-place of Apollo and Diana, and seat of their mysteries.

21. *Behind lay Tenos, Andros, and Mycone.* Three Cyclade islands in the line and near the end of her voyage ; Mycone being close to Delos.

*Dost float as in old time ?* The island of Delos is said to have risen from the sea in days of yore at a stroke of Neptune's trident, and to have been some time in choosing its resting-place.

22. *Sol's team then going to rest.* The sun just then going down.

*Soon as recalled.* As soon as the sun's horses are harnessed in the morning.

## 24.

Mother the altar went with blood to stain  
And entrail meats prepare.  
Old nurse, meanwhile, took me about the fane,  
Admiring everywhere.

## 25.

We visited the gates, and wondering gazed  
At gifts of kings, what not ?  
The altar of innumerable antlers raised ;  
Latona's yeaning spot.

## 26.

And much else, more than to relate we care,  
Rich food for wondering eyes.  
Haply, contemplating you saw me there,  
And deemed an easy prize.

## 27.

I' th' temple now they sacred songs rehearse :  
Could place appear more sane ?  
Before me rolls an apple with this verse ——  
Ha ! I 'd near sworn again.

## 28.

Nurse took it up, and, eyeing, " Read," she said,  
Great wit, and I perused.  
The name of marriage uttered, a deep red  
My conscious cheek suffused.

---

25. *The altar of innumerable antlers raised.* An immense altar raised by Apollo with the horns of animals killed by his sister was cited among the seven wonders of the world.

*Latona's yeaning spot.* Latona, we have seen, is the mother of Apollo and Diana. The spot of ground where they were born was within the precincts of the temple.

26. *Contemplating you saw me there.* Saw me contemplating there.

27. *This verse.* The verse given in the Argument of the last Letter.

28. *Great wit.* Acontius, great wit as you are.

## 29.

My down-cast eyes are fixed upon my breast :  
 Eyes serving your design.  
 Captor, why smilest ? Great glory here you wrest !  
 A virgin tricked is fine !

## 30.

Virgin, no axe in hand, no buckler worn,  
 Like a Penthesile ;  
 Nor belt of chiselled gold that might be torn,  
 As from Antiope.

## 31.

Fine vaunt, that a successful trick you wrought  
 On a too simple maid !  
 One fruit both me and Atalanta caught,  
 Hippomenes you 're made.

## 32.

Better, that infant helping whose flambeau  
 You mention so at ease,  
 Not with poor fraud a nobler course forego :  
 We were to ask, not seize.

## 33.

Why not at first bring forward every claim  
 An honest case might plead ?  
 By force why rather than persuasion aim,  
 To such if one might cede ?

30. *Penthesilea*. A queen of the Amazons, daughter of Mars. She was killed by Achilles in the early part of the Trojan war. The hero is said to have wept over the beautiful corpse.

*Antiope*. Another queen of the Amazons, daughter of Mars, and called also Hippolyte. She was overcome by Hercules, who took away her splendid girdle, and afterwards gave her to Theseus. By him, as we have seen, Letter IV., verse 30, she had Hippolytus to whom the fourth Letter is addressed by Phædra.

31. *One fruit both me and Atalanta caught,  
 Hippomenes you 're made.*

We have seen, Letter XVI., verse 65, how Hippomenes in the race beat Atalanta by means of three apples.

32. *That infant*. Cupid.

## 34.

What can avail your formula of oath  
And present deity ?  
'Tis mind that swears : we gave no plighted troth  
In mental verity.

## 35.

Thought and the soul's resolve alone can swear ;  
Without, no tie can bind.  
If from the will my faith were plighted there,  
The bride would be resigned.

## 36.

But if we give mere word, the mind apart,  
You 've word wanting *in re*.  
We have not sworn but read a bridal part :  
Read you as you would be.

## 37.

To fools such trash. Next comes a letter writ.  
With such, have Gyges' store :  
Make kings to swear you on their throne to sit,  
And honours what not more.

## 38.

With such, Diana's self is not more dread :  
Your pen one may redoubt.  
Yet though 'tis shown, in right you're nonsuited,  
My cause being pleaded out.

---

34. *Formula of oath.* Given in the Argument to Letter XX.

37. *With such have Gyges' store.* You have only to write a promise and use some trick that Gyges may read it, he will be bound to make you master of whatever treasures you please to insert. Gyges was an exceedingly rich king of Lydia. He came to the throne by the vanity of his predecessor Candaules, who must needs show him the unveiled beauties of his wife. This so incensed the queen that she resolved on revenge, and getting Gyges in her power, she threatened him with instant death unless he undertook to murder the king. Gyges preferred the latter, slew the monarch, and reigned in his stead. He left behind him a vast name for riches, but that reputation was surpassed some hundred and fifty years afterwards by his successor Croesus, whose name became proverbial of wealth.

38. *My cause being pleaded out.* She has established her proof that he has no right to her, but now comes her dread of the goddess, and a lurking disposition to give way to it.

## 39.

Latona's cruel daughter is a fear:  
 From her for sure my ail,  
 Or whence, as oft they marriage rites prepare,  
 So oft my organs fail?

## 40.

Thrice Hymen from the altar fled, and thrice  
 Turned from our house away,  
 When weary lamps relumed the edifice,  
 And flambeaux formed array.

## 41.

Odours as oft impregn'd our braided hair,  
 Our dress with rose replete:  
 At door, with fear of death, perceiving there  
 All to his cult unmeet,

## 42.

Hymen has frowned, thrown off his floral crown;  
 Shook from his hair the scent;  
 And, shaming to appear on florid gown,  
 To his cheek the crimson went.

## 43.

The bride alas! whom debile fevers keep,  
 Scarce bearing her attire,  
 Sees sorrowing parents at her pillow weep:  
 The wedding torch her pyre.

39. *Latona's daughter.* Diana.

40. *Thrice Hymen from the altar fled.* Three times the nuptial day was fixed and as often put off by illness.

*When weary lamps.* When the lamps weary of being so often lighted on the same occasion and in vain.

41. *At door, with fear of death, perceiving there.* Hymen perceiving at the door the fear of death and everything uncongenial to a marriage ceremony, has frowned, &c.

42. *To his cheek the crimson went.* The red colour just cast from his dress with the roses mounted to his cheeks in blushes.

43. *The wedding torch her pyre.* Flambeaux being used both for weddings and funerals, those prepared for her marriage, considering the state of her health, may light her to her grave.

## 44.

Spare me, O goddess of the unerring dart !  
 Get me thy brother's aid ;  
 Still it were shame the cure of ills his part,  
 And thine the ill to have made.

## 45.

In crystal waters, shaded from all sight,  
 Have I o'erlooked thy bath ?  
 Thyself, O goddess, do we ever slight ?  
 Nor thine my mother hath,

## 46.

Mine no offence, but read a subtle lie,  
 Grown learned in a dull verse.  
 Acontius, if you love, an offering try :  
 Who did should harm reverse.

## 47.

Why she who venges plight unpaid to you  
 Make that it cannot be ?  
 With life there's hope : will she at once undo  
 My life, your hope in me ?

## 48.

Yet never believe that he by us affied  
 On me e'er lay his touch :  
 He sat, allowed, indeed, at my bed-side,  
 In awe of maiden couch.

44. *Goddess of the unerring dart.* Diana.

*Get me thy brother's aid.* Apollo's ; he being the god of all arts, presides over that of medicine, on which we have seen him giving useful lessons to Ænone (Letter V., verses 37, 38.)

45. *Have I o'erlooked their bath.* Like Acteon (see Letter XX., verse 27).

*Nor thine my mother hath.* Nor has my mother slighted thine.

46. *An offering try.* Make an offering in the temple for the recovery of my health, to try whether it will have a good effect.

*Who did should harm reverse.* He who did the harm should strive to repair it.

47. *Why she who venges.* Why should Diana who avenges plight unpaid.

*Make that it cannot be.* Cause that the engagement plighted to you cannot be performed.

48. *Yet never believe that he.* The husband chosen by my parents.

49.

Lately a something he observes amiss :  
 Tears fall from hidden cause.  
 Rarely he dares caress or take a kiss,  
 And calls me his with pause.

50.

No wonder he perceive what obvious lies.  
 He comes ; I turn aside.  
 Nor speak ; but, as if sleeping, close my eyes,  
 And ill his touch abide.

51.

Deeply he sighs, deeming some unknown spite,  
 Though nothing ask redress.  
 Alas ! you triumph : this is your delight,  
 And I, alas ! confess.

52.

Ah me ! my tongue in rein, you 'd more deserve  
 Wrath for your artful snare.  
 Nearer our ailing person you would serve,  
 Farther 'twere need beware.

53.

Often I've pondered whence you have your name,  
 Acontius meaning "dart."  
 True, by your missile we have got a maim  
 Of long enduring smart.

54.

But why come here my fever's course to trace ?  
 Your double trophy hung.  
 Wasted my flesh, flushed without blood my face,  
 E'en like the fruit you flung.

52. *Nearer our ailing person you would serve.* Alluding to that wish expressed in his Letter, verse 34.

*Farther 'twere need beware.* Even were you farther off I had need beware.

53. *Acontius meaning "dart."* *ακοντιος*, a dart.

*Your missile.* The apple which you threw.

54. *Your double trophy hung.* Since you have gained a double victory : first, by shaking my principles with your letter ; and last, by gaining my heart.

*E'en like the fruit you flung.* The apple, whose rosy colour indicated no blood.

55.

My cheek has now of red no mingled shade,  
 As new-wrought marble wont.  
 Pale as a silver vase at banquet laid,  
 Filled from a gelid fount.

56.

Seeing me thus, you 'd swear not seen till now,  
 Nor deem me worth your art.  
 You 'd disengage me then from all my vow,  
 Regretting Dian's part.

57.

Haply you 'd cause me contrary to plight,  
 And other words repeat.  
 Would to your asking you could have the sight,  
 And know your bride's defeat.

58.

For then, Acontius, harder though than steel,  
 In my own words you 'd pray.—  
 At Delphos now, in search of means to heal,  
 They 're gone to make assay.

59.

The god, 'tis whispered, now begins complain  
 That some one is forsworn.  
 Thus say the priests, and thus my verse again:  
 All verses serve your turn.

55.

*Pale as a silver vase at banquet laid,  
 Filled from a gelid fount.*

Imagine, reader, the dew which the icy water casts over the polished surface and deadens its lustre. Is it not a sweet image of paleness?

57.

*Would to your asking you could have a sight,  
 And knew your bride's defeat.*

I wish that as you ask you could have a sight of me and know to what state I am reduced.

59. *The god.* The oracle, or the priest of the oracle.

*All verses serve your turn.* As it seems from that which you composed and that which I now write.



## 60.

Whence this advantage? haply your new style,  
On gods imposing bands.  
It binds the gods, I follow them the while,  
And here hold out my hands.

## 61.

To mother is confessed the compact wrought,  
With downcast eye 'twas told.  
The rest your care. 'Twas more than virgin ought  
A stealthy pen to hold.

## 62.

My fingers now, in a sad weary plight,  
Refuse their work to do.  
What else? with you I'm willing to unite,  
And wish you well. Adieu!

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60. *On gods imposing bands.* Imposing on Diana the obligation of favouring your interest.

61. *The compact wrought.* The engagement which I now make with you.

FINIS.

h.e.

v-u



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JUN 28 1928

